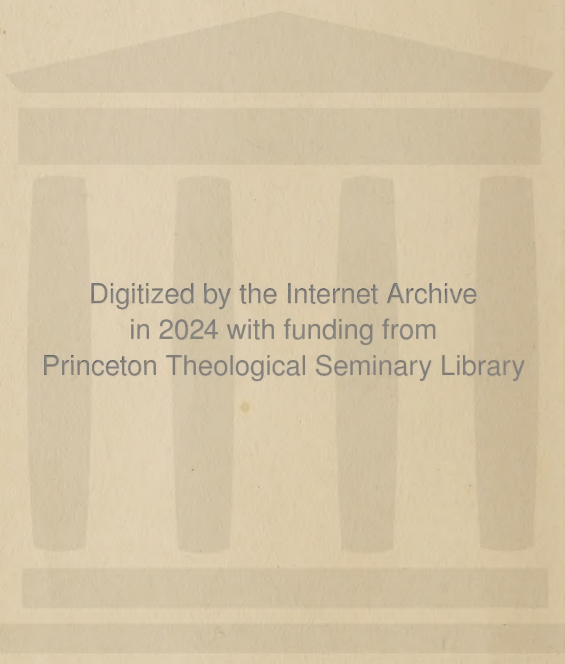


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The Heights of Christian Blessedness

A STUDY OF THE BEATITUDES

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TO
MY SON

JAMES JUVENAL HAYES
POET, PACIFIST, COLLEGE PROFESSOR

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FOREWORD

THIS book attempts to give a literalistic, idealistic, pacifistic, Quaker, Mennonite, Christian interpretation of the Beatitudes. It gives an undue proportion of space to the Seventh Beatitude, because that beatitude brings us face to face with the greatest practical issue of the present day, the abolition of war or the end of our Western or world civilization. It seeks to express the mind of Christ throughout.

INTRODUCTION: ON BLESSEDNESS

JESUS had been preaching for some weeks and months in Galilee. His fame had spread among the people. They were attracted by the gracious words of this young Evangelist. They had gathered in large numbers on this occasion to hear him. He took his seat on the mountainside and a hush of expectation fell upon the whole company. How would he begin? What would be his theme? Would he take a text? What would be his first word? They must not lose it.

Every eye was fixed upon him. Every ear was alert. They leaned forward to listen. He opened his lips and said, "Blessed!"¹ Blessed! So that would be his subject to-day. He would tell them how to be happy. He would show them in what true blessedness consists. Nothing could suit them better than that. Every soul there desired to be blessed. Every heart there longed for happiness. Few if any ever had attained it; and if they had, it had been only a fleeting possession. They all yearned to know how they could be happy all the time.

God was blessed. Paul used this same word

¹ Μακάριοι.

when in later years he wrote to Timothy concerning "the gospel of the glory of the blessed God."² He alone was the infinitely Blessed One, and he was willing to share his blessedness with his children according to their capacity to receive it. Would the Teacher tell them how they might enter into something of the blessedness of God?

The dead were blessed. John used this same word when in later years he wrote in the Apocalypse, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."³ They rest from their labors. They are free from the bereavements and the sorrows of earth. They have left the trials of this life behind them. They have nothing to do but to enjoy the presence and the blessing of God. Would the Teacher show them how they might enter here and now into something of the peace and the blessedness of the departed dead? Could they be blessed in this life? Could they be happy here on earth? One can imagine those peasants of Palestine waiting and eager to hear.

I. IS HAPPINESS ATTAINABLE?

1. *General Experience.* All men always have been earnestly seeking for personal hap-

²I Tim. 1. 11, τοῦ μακαρίου θεοῦ.

³Rev. 14. 13, μακάριοι οἱ νεκροί.

piness, and most men have failed to find it. To many it has seemed like a phantom, eluding their grasp and incapable of realization. Others have imagined that it was conditioned upon external circumstances, for which they sighed but which seemed to be beyond their reach. To the great majority of our race, happiness has seemed to belong to some far-away, dimly imaginable but wholly invisible heaven, and to have no home on earth. Blessedness might be the portion of immortal spirits in the regions of bliss, but blessedness belonged to few or none who were encompassed by the miseries of human life.

2. *Testimony of the Greeks.* (1) Solon was one of the Seven Wise Men of Greece, but the final conclusion of his wisdom was, "No mortal man is truly blessed; but all are wretched whom the sun looks down upon." This strain of pessimism runs through all the Greek literature.

(2) Simonides laments: "Few and evil are the days of our lives; but everlasting is the sleep which we must sleep beneath the earth. . . . Small is the strength of man, and invincible are his sorrows. Grief treads upon the heels of grief through this short life; and death which no man shuns hangs over him at last. To this bourne come the good

and bad alike." This was the conception of human life which established itself in the Greek poetry and philosophy.

(3) Theognis expressed it in his elegy: "It is the best of all things for the sons of earth not to be born, nor to see the bright rays of the sun, or else after birth to pass as soon as possible the gates of death, and to lie deep down beneath a weight of earth."

Bacchylides and Sophocles and Euripides repeat this sentiment, and from them it was copied into the Latin literature, and it has been reproduced again and again in the writings of the modern days. Best not to be born; or, if born, to die as soon as possible! It is the conclusion of pagan pessimism.

(4) Bring sackcloth and drape it in heavy folds for the frame of the picture. Paint in a background of deepest night. Let the only illumination be that of the lightning flash from the heart of the storm. Then place in the midst of that setting the sublime passage from Empedocles, worthy of Homer, equal to Æschylus, one of the grandest and most gloomy flights in world literature, and let it stand as a fit representative of the old Greek conception of the miseries of earth and the wretchedness of human life.

The poet sings of the human race in the

midst of this world's woes: "I lifted up my voice, I wept, I wailed, when I beheld the unfamiliar shore; a hideous shore, on which dwell murder, envy, and the troop of baleful destinies, wasting corruption, and disease. Through Ate's meadow they go wandering up and down in gloom." The contrasts on every hand seem only to intensify that gloom. "There was the queen of darkness, and Heliope with her far-searching eyes, and bloody strife and mild-eyed peace, beauty and ugliness, swiftness and sloth, and lovely truth and insincerity with darkling brows. Birth too and death, slumber and wakefulness, motion and immobility, crowned majesty and squalid filth, discordant clamor and the voice of gods."

3. *Testimony of Scripture.* These conceptions of human life do not belong to the pages of profane literature alone; we can parallel them closely in certain passages of the Sacred Book.

(1) Job, ancient philosopher and poet, sighed in the midst of his misery, "Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble. . . . His flesh upon him shall be pain, and his soul within him shall mourn."⁴

(2) That old preacher and pessimist who wrote the book of Ecclesiastes has declared:

⁴Job 14. 1, 22.

“All is vanity and vexation of spirit, and there is no profit under the sun . . . For what hath man of all his labor and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath labored under the sun? For all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.”⁵

4. *Testimony of Modern Times.* (1) In modern times Petrarch sings: “Blindness seizeth on us in the beginning of life, labor in the middle, grief in the end, error in all. What day ariseth to us without some grief, care, or anguish?”

(2) Saint Bernard assures us that there is no creature so miserable as man. He is “in miseries of body, in miseries of mind, miseries of heart, in miseries asleep, in miseries awake, in miseries wheresoever he turns.”

(3) Burton, in the *Anatomy of Melancholy*, cites his usual host of authorities to the same effect and then concludes: “Our whole life is an Irish sea, wherein there is naught to be expected but tempestuous storms and troublesome waves, and these infinite . . . In a word, the world itself is a maze, a labyrinth of errors, a desert, a wilderness, a den of thieves, cheaters, etc., full of filthy puddles, horrid rocks, precipices, an ocean of adversity,

⁵Eccl. 2, 11, 22, 23.

a heavy yoke, wherein infirmities and calamities overtake us, and they follow one another as the sea waves; and if we escape Scylla, we fall foul on Charybdis; and so in perpetual fear, labor, anguish, we run from one plague, one mischief, one burden to another, serving in hard service, and you may as soon separate weight from lead, heat from fire, moistness from water, brightness from the sun, as misery, discontent, care, calamity, danger from a man. Our towns and cities are but so many dwellings of human misery.”

If these things are true, absolutely and unqualifiedly true, then human life is a misfortune, an imposition; and it will be impossible to find a happy man. Many people have been of that opinion.

(4) Boswell declares that Samuel Johnson never would allow anybody to say that he was happy or that anyone else was happy. “It is all cant,” he declared. “The dog knows that he is miserable all the time.” Johnson had a very close friend who one time told him that his wife’s sister was a really happy woman, and he asked the lady herself, who was present, if that were not true; and she declared with great emphasis that it was true and that she was happy all the time. Then Samuel Johnson, the blunt brute that he sometimes was,

made reply, "If your sister-in-law is really the contented being she professes herself, sir, her life gives the lie to every research of humanity; for she is happy, without health, without beauty, without money, and without understanding." Then he went away growling and said to his friend, "I tell you the woman is ugly, and sickly, and foolish, and poor; and would it not make a man hang himself to hear such a creature say she was happy?"

That story would lead us to suppose that Samuel Johnson believed that happiness was dependent upon favorable external circumstances, and that no one could be happy who was ugly and sickly and foolish and poor. If that were true, we might agree with all that the pessimists have said about human life and its miseries; for few indeed are those who have everything which their hearts could desire along these lines. The vast majority of us come short of complete satisfaction in health or wealth or beauty or wisdom. If we are to be happy, our happiness must be of such a sort as to make us superior to all deficiencies in these things. That sister-in-law may have been a snob and a prig and the liar that Samuel Johnson said she was; but, Samuel Johnson to the contrary notwithstanding, if she had been a humble and truthful and good

woman, it was perfectly possible for her to have been a happy woman without health, without beauty, without any considerable sum of money, and without any considerable amount of understanding.

II. IN WHAT DOES HAPPINESS CONSIST?

Every man desires to be happy, and every man except the hopeless pessimist expects to be happy at some time or other; but there are about as many different notions of happiness and as many different opinions as to its essence and source as there are differing ages, conditions, and dispositions among men. Cicero said that in his day there were twenty rival opinions concerning the source of true happiness, and Varro went further and enumerated two hundred and eighty such opinions. The moderns have as many different notions as the ancients did. We can suggest only a few of them.

1. *Testimony of Hume.* Hume held that all happy people are equally happy. He illustrated that proposition with the little girl who has a new gown and goes to a dancing school, and is perfectly happy when the other little girls crowd around her and admire the new dress or else silently cast envious glances at it, which only increase her bliss. She is as

happy as any living soul can be. Then Hume instanced the general at the head of his victorious army. He hears the plaudits of the multitude on every hand. He knows that he is everywhere recognized as the saviour of the land. His name is in every newspaper and on every tongue, and he has richly deserved the people's gratitude and praise. In the consciousness of his own desert and of his popularity apparent everywhere, he is as happy as any living soul can be. Hume gave as a third illustration the orator who has made an eloquent speech in the great assembly. He has seen apathy roused into interest, opposition won over into applause by his argument. He has seen tears in some eyes, smiles on many faces, frowns chased from every brow, and a whole multitude swayed at last under the power of his words, until he is sure that his cause will command universal respect. When he has concluded, it is the triumph of a lifetime and the whole audience rises to give him an ovation; and as he receives their congratulations he is as happy as any living soul can be.

The girl, the general, the orator are equally happy, according to Hume. There is a degree of speciousness in that proposition, as in other statements of Hume; but we only notice in

connection with it that Hume seems to think that happiness can come from a new gown, a great victory, an oratorical triumph, or anything else which suffices to make the individual satisfied with himself and his present situation. The common feature in all of Hume's illustrations is the admiration of associates with the possible added consciousness that it is deserved; but they all have to do with a temporary pleasure, and everybody knows that self-esteem or self-conceit, flattery or fame, or whatever we choose to call it, cannot give any abiding happiness to the soul.

2. *Heine.* Heinrich Heine was one of the most witty and most wicked of writers, and he was very wise too in many a thing which he said. His writings had won for him a Continental renown when he was stricken with the paralysis which at last proved fatal. From his sickroom he punctured the fallacy that fame alone could furnish happiness. He said: "Fame, once sweet as sugared pineapple, has for a long time been nauseous to me; it tastes as bitter to me now as wormwood . . . What does it avail me that at banquets my health is pledged in the choicest wine, drunk from golden goblets, if at the same time I, with all that makes life pleasant denied to me, may only wet my lips with an insipid, dis-

agreeable, medicinal drink? What benefit is it to me that enthusiastic youths and maidens crown my marble bust with laurel wreaths, if meanwhile the shriveled fingers of an aged nurse press a blister of Spanish flies to the back of my head? What does it avail me that all the roses of Sharon tenderly glow and bloom for me? Sharon is two thousand miles away from the street where I live, and in the dreary solitude of my sick-room I have nothing to smell, unless it be the perfume of warmed-over poultices."

Heine lay in his living death for year after year, but he never lost his wittiness nor his wickedness. He was a German by birth, a Jew by descent, a Parisian by adoption and choice. There in Paris he told the world his ideal of happiness. He said: "I have the most peaceable disposition. My desires are a modest cottage with thatched roof, but a good bed, good fare, fresh milk and butter, flowers by my window, and a few fine trees before the door; and if the Lord wished to fill my cup of happiness, he would grant me the pleasure of seeing some six or seven of my enemies hanged on those trees. With a heart moved to pity, I would, before their death, forgive the injury they had done me during their lives. I think we ought to forgive our enemies, but

not until they are hanged." This was Heine's real or pretended ideal of happiness: a cottage home, a row of fine trees before it, and his enemies hanged on the trees.

3. *Gray.* We said that there would be as many different notions of happiness as there are different dispositions among men. The poet Gray said that his ideal of happiness was "intellectual ease and luxury. It would be a kind of Mohammedan paradise to me if I could lie on a sofa and read eternal new romances of Miravaux and Crebillon." To lie on a sofa and read French novels forever would be no paradise to some of us. It would be a purgatory by the end of one month, and it would be the blackest depths of Tartarus in less than a year.

4. *Thoreau.* Thoreau was a poet, too, an essayist, a naturalist, and a hermit, living on the shore of Walden Pond. Emerson said of him that he never had a profession, never married, never used tobacco, never ate flesh, never went to church, never cast a vote, never paid any taxes to the state. His idea of happiness was to be found in independence. He said, "I would rather sit on a pumpkin and have it all to myself than to sit on a velvet cushion and be crowded by somebody else."

5. *Society.* For one individual like Tho-

reau we could find a multitude who would be ready to assert that happiness was to be sought not in solitude but in society. Their motto is, "The more the merrier." They fill the ballrooms, crowd the theaters and the hotels, flock to the seaside and the mountain resorts. They always are in society and they never would think of finding happiness anywhere else than there. Solitude would mean misery to most of them. What pleasure they know, they find in company.

Boswell said to Samuel Johnson one time that grand houses were built, fine gardens were made, splendid places of public amusement were contrived and crowded with company on the supposition that happiness could be found in these things; and Johnson replied: "These are only struggles for happiness. When I first entered Ranelagh it gave an expansion and gay sensation to my mind, such as I never experienced anywhere else. But as Xerxes wept when he viewed his immense army and considered that not one of that great multitude would be alive a hundred years afterward, so it went to my heart to consider that there was not one in all that brilliant circle that was not afraid to go home and think; but that the thoughts of each individual there would be distressing when alone."

To which Boswell in the biography adds these words: "This reflection was experimentally just. The feeling of languor which succeeds the animation of gayety is itself a very severe pain; and when the mind is then vacant a thousand disappointments and vexations rush in and excruciate. Will not many even of my fairest readers allow this to be true?"

They surely would, these society people who rush from one social engagement to another, as if their life depended on their being always in the crowd, and as if they dreaded the possibility of ever being compelled to be alone long enough to feel the necessity of serious thought.

Samuel Johnson said that their happiness depended on their thoughtlessness; and Madame de Sevigne said that the same thing was true of all men. "Man is never happy for the present. His only relief from unhappiness," she avers, "is in forgetting himself for a little while."

6. *Drink.* If that be true, the old cynic was right who said that no man could be happy in the present unless he got drunk. A toper used to say: "I am as poor as poverty; but what is the use of worrying about that, when for fifteen cents I can be as rich as a king? I am as miserable as they make them; but what

is the difference, if three drinks of whisky can make me the happiest man in town?"

That old toper never had heard of Madame Sevigne or Samuel Johnson or the cynic or philosopher who believed that happiness was to be found in forgetfulness, but he was the practical illustration of their doctrine. Whether the Madame or the poet or the philosopher would care to acknowledge it or not, the blear-eyed, sodden-brained drunkard is a devotee of their philosophy. He drinks to forget his misery; and in the drink and in forgetfulness while the effects of the drink are upon him he finds his single glimpse of happiness.

7. *Work.* Some people find forgetfulness in their work, and some people think that happiness is to be found only in work.

(1) Canon Liddon said, "The happiest days of my life have been those in which I have had the most work to do, with fair health and strength to do it."

(2) Someone asked the Rothschild who was at the head of the great financial house in Paris if he did not consider himself the happiest, as he was supposed to be the richest man on earth; and Rothschild smiled and shrugged his shoulders and said: "Certainly, if there were no advantages connected with

wealth, one would not give oneself so much trouble to get it; but happiness is another affair. At bottom, happiness, the only real happiness, is in work."

(3) James Montgomery, the poet, once wrote: "Labor is the symbol of man's punishment; and labor is the secret of man's happiness."

(4) Hugh Macmillan declares that "Happiness is the flower which grows from a thorn of sorrow transformed by man's cultivation. The beautiful myth which placed the golden apples of the Hesperides in a garden guarded by dragons is an allegory illustrative of the great human fact that not till we have slain the dragons of selfishness and sloth can we obtain any of the golden successes of life. Supposing it were possible that we could obtain the objects of our desire without any toil or trouble, we should not enjoy them. To benefit us really, they must be the growths of our own self-denial and labor."

There is truth in these statements. There is happiness in work. The idle man is an unhappy man. The man who knows the real pleasure and joy of life is the man who is taking his due share of life's activities. The lazy man who sits about and suns himself from morning to noonday and from noonday to

night becomes a very hotbed of chronic complaints. His muscles get flabby and his mind gets morbid and the grass grows up about his feet and the rankest weeds flourish in his head and the moss grows on his back and his flesh is filled with all the diseases which mortal man falls heir to and he dies at last of fatty degeneration of the brain, the bowels, or the heart. The idle man always is an unhappy man. The lazy man who abhors the thought of exerting himself and who prefers the enjoyment of vegetating in the shade or the sun grows into a cabbagehead with the soul of a mustard seed and at last is not worth a mess of pottage or a sack of beans. The mosquitos bite him viciously, and the flies annoy him terribly, and the vermin accumulate upon him incredibly, and his neighbors despise him universally, and only his wife and his dog think that he is worth the trouble of looking after. He sits idle in the midst of the demands and the opportunities of this workaday world, until he sinks below the level of a man and the level of the brute. He is of less service than a vegetable or the inanimate creation. He is the most worthless thing in the universe. When he dies he will sink into the nethermost depths of inanition. He will not have energy enough to stop sinking. Happiness does not

grow out of laziness any more than grapes from thorns or figs from thistles.

(5) Therefore Carlyle preached to his generation: "Admirable was that of the old monks, *Laborare est Orare*, Work is Worship. Older than all preached Gospels was this unpreached, inarticulate, but ineradicable, forever-enduring Gospel: Work, and therein have well-being." Paul said, "If a man does not work, let him not eat," and the Worker's Republic in Russia makes it one of the fundamental principles of its organization that all of its members shall work. They think that happiness will come to their people only in that way.

(6) Spurgeon would have agreed with this conception, only adding the touch of religion. He said, "The happiest state on earth is one in which we have something to do, strength to do it with, and a fair return for what we have done. This, with the divine blessing, is all that we ought to desire, and it is sufficient for any man who fears the Lord and abhors covetousness."

(7) Emerson preached the same gospel of the physical and spiritual value of work when he said, "The high prize of life, the crowning fortune of a man is to be born with a bias to some pursuit, which finds him in employ-

ment and in happiness, whether it be to make baskets or broadswords, or canals, or statues, or songs."

8. *Composite Source.* (1) If we were to ask the Greek nation at the height of its intellectual and artistic achievement what the essentials of an ideally happy existence might be, it probably would answer us by quoting the popular song usually ascribed to Simonides, "To be in health is the best thing for mortal man; the next thing, to be of form and nature beautiful; the third, to enjoy wealth gotten without fraud; and the fourth, to be in youth's bloom among friends."

(2) Or it might give the answer of Thales, the first of the Ionian philosophers, who said that a happy man was one "healthy in body, easy in circumstances, well-stored in his mind." Those are excellent definitions, except that they say nothing at all of the condition of the spirit of man. For pagan epigrams, they are incomparable, but they fall short of the truth because they find happiness in circumstances rather than in character.

(3) Health does not necessarily bring happiness. It is a great blessing, too often too little prized by those who have it. Yet the most healthy man in the community may be found to be the greatest grumbler in it.

Everything in the world may go wrong with him, and he may be at cross purposes with the whole creation. Nothing may suit him from the national government down to his own wife.

(4) Wealth alone cannot give happiness. Abdalrahman the Khalif had thousands of wives and millions upon millions of wealth; but in his closet after his death they found a document which has been widely copied into reliable histories. The writing said: "I have now reigned above fifty years in victory or peace. I have been beloved by my subjects, dreaded by my enemies, and respected by my allies. Riches and honor, power and pleasure, have waited on my call, nor does any earthly blessing appear to have been wanting to my felicity. In this situation I have diligently numbered the days of pure and genuine happiness which have fallen to my lot: they amount to fourteen." Fourteen happy days for a man who had lived in a palace of marble for fifty years, and had been envied by all who knew him! He did not tell us what made those fourteen days happy ones, but we may feel reasonably sure that if he had made that record, not one of them would have been found to have received its pure and genuine happiness from his palaces and his jewels, his thousands of wives or his millions of wealth.

(5) Beauty cannot give happiness. Madame Récamier was for forty years the acknowledged queen of French society, gifted with natural grace and beauty seldom seen. Yet she wrote to her niece: "I am here in the center of fêtes, princesses, illuminations, spectacles. Two of my windows face the ballroom, the other two front the theater. Amidst this clatter I am in a perfect solitude. I sit and muse on the shore of the ocean. I go over all the sad circumstances of my life. I hope you will be more happy than I have been." A queen of beauty, a queen in society, a queen of wit, Madame Récamier sat solitary and sad, an unhappy woman through it all.

Happiness is not to be found in knowledge alone nor in youth. Give a man health, wealth, beauty, knowledge, and youth; combine in one individual all the essentials of happiness named by the poets and the philosophers of Greece; and yet we have not found the really and abidingly happy man.

(6) Was there ever a better example furnished in world history than that of Goethe, standing at the head of German literature as Shakespeare stands foremost with us? Goethe had no such obscure biography as our Shakespeare had. He was an Apollo in personal beauty, attracting the attention of all whom

he might meet. His talents were early recognized and he spent much of his lifetime in a royal court. He had ample means, vast mental resources, youth, beauty, fame. Good fortune attended him from the beginning to the end of his long life. What Carlyle once said of his youth might be applied to the whole of his biography: it was wholly an element of sun and azure, wherein his spirit, awakening and attaining, could on all hands richly unfold itself.

Let him stand, then, as one of the individuals most nearly realizing the Greek ideal of happiness; healthy in body, in form and nature beautiful, easy in circumstances, well-stored in mind. What did Goethe say in his old age? "I have ever been considered one of Fortune's chief favorites; nor can I complain of the course which my life has taken. Yet, truly, there has been nothing but toil and care; and in my seventy-fifth year I may say that I have never had four weeks of genuine pleasure. The stone was ever to be rolled up anew." Goethe had had all that this world could offer, and yet he never had seen four happy weeks.

He was essentially a heathen in the eighteenth century, reproducing in these modern times as fully as any other man we know the

spirit and the ideals of the old Greek life; and yet that was all that they could do for him. He could not wholly escape the influence of his Christian environment and he had a glimpse of the Christian ideal when he said: "Who is the happiest of men? He who values the merits of others, and in their pleasure takes joy even as though it were his own." An unselfish appreciation of the good in others and a feeling of fellowship in their joys, that is an approach at least to the conception of Jesus.

9. *Pessimistic Conclusion.* If Madame Récamier and the Khalif Abdalrahman and the poet Goethe could not be happy for four weeks or even for fourteen days, it would seem that the pessimists had the right of the matter. Few indeed are blessed as these were blessed with health and wealth and knowledge and beauty and fame and power and youth; and if these things could not bring happiness, how can there be any hope for the poor and the weak and the ignorant and the afflicted of earth?

(1) That epigram of Palladas in the Greek Anthology might be made to summarize the experience of the race:

"Tears were my birthright; born in tears,
 In tears too must I die;
 And mine has been, through life's long years,
 A tearful destiny."

(2) It must be as Beatrice Harraden said: "Happiness is to most of us a phantom, a ship that passes in the night." Man is born into miseries. No mortal man is truly blessed, but all are wretched whom the sun looks down upon. Happiness has no home on earth. It may belong to some far-off and invisible heaven, but it is not within our reach as long as we live here. Small is the strength of man and invincible are his sorrows. Grief treads upon the heels of grief through this short life, and you may as well try to separate heat from fire as misery from man. It is all nonsense to talk about blessedness for him.

(3) Aristotle was a true Greek when he said that a blessed life was impossible to the diseased because of their physical disabilities, and to the poor because they lacked the very necessities of life, and to the slaves because they were mere tools in the hands of other men, and to the young who died before they had had a chance to realize life's blessedness.

(4) Gautama Buddha was a thoroughgoing pessimist as far as human life was concerned. To him the self was the source of ceaseless misery, and the only way to attain to blessedness was in the extinction of the personality.

10. *Hope in Jesus.* Here on the mountain slope in Galilee stands a greater than Aristotle

or Gautama Buddha, and he has a more hopeful conception of life than they. He believes that all men may be happy. He proclaims blessedness for the whole human race. His beatitudes can be realized by the young and the old, the rich and the poor, the sick and the well, the peasant and the philosopher, the slave and the master, the well-favored and the ill-favored alike.

His conception of blessedness is to be found in a life devoted to the service of God and man, conscious of the approval of God upon all of its motives and desires, and realizing its continuous reward in the peace and joy which its fellowship with the Father assures.

Plato had said that "the best and justest is also the happiest man." Aristotle declared that while the vulgar might think that the tyrant who could indulge himself in all bodily enjoyments was both happy and blessed, the philosopher knew better; for he realized that only the man who lived well and acted well was happy, since happiness was a state which only the best and most honorable of men could compass. Spinoza defined blessedness as the peace of mind begotten by the immediate intuition of God. He had learned from Jesus, who gives us no definition of blessedness here but tells us what sort of people are blessed.

Carlyle put the sarcastic question, "Will the whole finance ministers and upholsterers and confectioners of modern Europe undertake in joint stock company to make one shoeblack happy?" And when he declared that they could not do it he gave as the reason for that fact: "There is in man a higher than love of happiness; he can do without happiness and instead thereof find blessedness. Was it not to preach forth this same Higher that sages and martyrs, the poet and the priest, in all times, have spoken and suffered; bearing testimony, through life and through death, of the Godlike that is in man, and how in the Godlike only has he strength and freedom?"

11. *Happiness and Blessedness.* Happiness may be dependent upon happenings. There may be an element of hap or chance about it. Blessedness is dependent upon character, and character may be superior to all circumstances. It is neither accidental nor incidental, but essential and assured. Happiness comes from without; blessedness abides within. Happiness may come and go, but blessedness may be as permanent as personality. As Carlyle suggested, a man can do without happiness if he has attained to the strength and the freedom and the blessedness which a life in God can give.

On the mount of the Great Sermon there is a greater than any sage or martyr of the past, a greater than any poet or priest in all history. Whether these people of Palestine realized it or not, they were privileged on this spring morning to listen to the greatest Teacher of all time, the One destined to become the supreme Master of the minds and the hearts of men. They were glad to know that he was to talk to them about blessedness. They were eager to know the secret of a permanently happy life. That first word, "Blessed!" aroused their joyous anticipation. How surprised they must have been to hear the conclusion of the sentence, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." What did that mean?

It seems startling enough to us now; but we scarcely can realize how much more startling it must have seemed in that day when Jesus spoke it. It was something new in the world then. John Wesley said, "One can but observe here that Christianity begins just where heathen morality ends; poverty of spirit, conviction of sin, the renouncing ourselves, the not having our own righteousness (the very first point in the religion of Jesus Christ), leaving all pagan religion behind. This was ever hid from the wise men of this

world, insomuch that the whole Roman language, even with all the improvements of the Augustan age, does not afford so much as a name for humility (the word from which we borrow this, as is well known, bearing in Latin a quite different meaning); no, nor was one found in all the copious language of Greece, till it was made by the great apostle.”⁶ Here was a wisdom transcending everything which had gone before. It was so wise that it has seemed to many to be perfect foolishness instead.

⁶Wesley, *Works*, vol. i, p. 183.

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST BEATITUDE

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

1. *The Promise.* In the order of the beatitudes the promise attached to the first and the last is identical—“for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” In these two beatitudes the verb of the promise is in the present tense; in all the others the verb is future. To the poor in spirit and to the persecuted the kingdom of heaven is to be a present possession. The promises attached to some of the other beatitudes may be delayed in their fulfillment; their fruition may belong to some future time. Let us notice first of all that the poor in spirit and the persecuted may have the kingdom of heaven here and now. The kingdom of heaven may be within them, a better and more abiding possession than any property or any external goods ever can be. Poverty better than property—what a strange statement! Persecution consistent with blessedness!—how could that be possible? The kingdom of heaven given as a present possession to the

poor in spirit and the persecuted for righteousness' sake—what a startling revelation!

In this list of beatitudes poverty comes first and persecution comes last and to the poor a kingdom is promised and to the persecuted a crown. They are to be crowned kings in the kingdom of heaven here and now. The poor in spirit may have little or nothing in this world, and the persecuted may be deprived of all their earthly goods, but spiritually they may be multimillionaires. They have the whole kingdom of heaven for their own. Homeless here, they have a home in the heart of God. Poor here, they revel in spiritual wealth. Persecuted here, they are acclaimed as heroes and victors in the courts of God.

2. *One Character.* These beatitudes all go together. They do not picture several different kinds of people who are blessed. They present several different aspects of one character to which blessedness is assured. They do not represent types of character which are to be realized in different groups of individuals or in different temperaments and dispositions. They give the complete portrait of the one truly blessed man. No one of these characteristics is to be cultivated at the expense of the others. They are all to be developed in due proportion to each other.

These several qualities are to be combined in the one perfect character. They were all realized together in Jesus. They were altogether realized in him. He lived what he preached. He himself was what he asked others to be. The beatitudes portray abstractly what he incarnated actually. He asked others only to live as he lived.

3. *For All.* Now since it is one character which is here presented, it follows that all these promises attached to the several beatitudes apply to this one character in its many-sided manifestation. Therefore this promise of the present possession of the kingdom of heaven, the specific reward attached to the first and the last of the beatitudes, is understood with all the others as well. The comfort, the inheritance, the satisfaction, the obtaining of mercy, the sight of God, the acknowledgment of sonship with God depend upon this possession of the kingdom and are possible only on that basis. These promises are not promises of many different things. As Tholuck has said, "If we consider the substance of the several promises, we shall find that they are all essentially identical, and that the difference is merely rhetorical; formally, they correspond to the thing desired or possessed, but each of them really comprises all

spiritual blessings." All good is in each one of them. They vary in form, but they mean one and the same thing.

4. *First Lesson.* All these possessions are the natural and inevitable privileges of the citizens in the Kingdom. They are the inalienable rights of the children of the king. God is the King. We are his children. We may enter at once into the enjoyment of all of the riches which the heavenly Father provides for his children. Heaven can mean nothing more than that. Heaven will be the enjoyment of God and all the riches of God in perfect felicity. We may have a heaven on earth. According to the fullness of our capacity we may enjoy God and all the riches of God here and now. That is the first lesson of the life of Jesus. That is the first statement in the Sermon on the Mount.

I. THE KINGDOM

1. *In the Old Testament.* What was the kingdom of heaven? These people to whom Jesus talked there on the mountain top were all more or less acquainted with the Old Testament. They had attended synagogue services all their lives. They had heard the Scriptures read and expounded. They knew that the thought of the Kingdom ran through the

whole of the Word of God. From Genesis to Malachi the prophetic promises of the Kingdom had made the Jews the people of a great hope. The Messiah was to come, and he would establish the kingdom of God upon the earth. In that glad day God would be acknowledged universally and his will would be obeyed by all men. It had been the purpose of God in the creation that the human race should yield to him willing and perfect obedience. The race had become sinful and disobedient, had disappointed its Maker, and had forfeited all claim to the enjoyment of the blessedness which continuous communion with God would have given it. When the Messiah came he would restore the race to God's favor. So much that congregation on the mountain slope may have understood from these words.

Possibly no one among them had any thought that the Messiah had come and was standing there before them. If they had any vague hope of that sort, they were waiting for developments before they committed themselves in any way. The Messiah would be good, but he would also be great. He would be a healer of all the diseases and a comforter in all the afflictions of his people, but he would be a world-conqueror as well. This man Jesus was a wise teacher and a wonder-

worker of a sort, but he had given no indication as yet that he was expecting to launch forth upon a Messianic career.

2. *In the Apocalypses.* Probably the apocryphical conceptions of the postcanonical times were cherished in many hearts and minds among them, and they expected the kingdom of heaven to break in upon the world-order in some spectacular and overwhelming fashion, with supernatural wonders in the heavens above and on the earth beneath, with a cataclysmic overturning of the kingdoms of this world and a more or less instantaneous inauguration of the kingdom of God. There had been little or nothing in the career of this Nazarene carpenter which would suggest any connection with such a program of portents or any reason for the expectation of a series of divine interventions in connection with his mission of preaching and teaching.

3. *Its Foundation.* Whether they realized it or not, Jesus was saying to them in the opening words of this sermon: "The kingdom of heaven is founded upon character, not upon conquest or violence or force. Character cannot be imposed upon anyone from without. It must be freely developed from within. It is an individual matter and it is individually achieved. The kingdom of heaven never can

be supernaturally imposed upon an unwilling world. It must be accepted and loved before it can become a present possession. That means a transformation of individual character; and that means an apocalyptic breaking in of the divine order upon the natural order in the individual life. That breaking in of the divine order means repentance and conversion. Conversion is an apocalyptic experience, for it is the individual response to the apocalypse of God's will."

4. *Its Cataclysm.* It has been said that the Sermon on the Mount does not deal with repentance and conversion. It is because these things are presupposed. John the Baptist had come preaching, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."¹ Jesus began his ministry with the same text.² He had preached repentance and the necessity of the new birth before he preached this sermon. He had said "Repent" before he was ready to say "Blessed." The Kingdom was at hand if they would repent and believe and receive. The Kingdom was theirs as a present possession only after these things had been done. The only apocalypse necessary for its inauguration was the apocalypse to the individual conscience, and

¹Matt. 3. 2.

²Matt. 4. 17.

the only cataclysm to be expected and demanded was the cataclysm of individual conversion.

It would be a supernatural intervention, but it might be as natural as the dawn of the new day, as the coming of the spring, as the youthful beginning of a new life. All these things are the manifestations of the divine power. They are marvels of the divine mercy; but there is nothing portentous about them. They are to be expected in the divine order of things. Light instead of darkness when the sun comes up, green grass and flowers and warmth and life instead of winter barrenness and cold and death when the spring comes in, a new birth and a renewal of youth's hopes and energies and enthusiasms when the kingdom of heaven is set up in the heart.

5. *Its Definition.* What is the kingdom of heaven? It is a spiritual kingdom, gracious as the dawn, beautiful as the spring, entrancing as that old paradise in the youth of the race or the new paradise in the youth of every man's life. It is the spiritual kingdom in which God is King and man is a prince in filial love and willing service. This kingdom is given to the poor in spirit and the persecuted for righteousness' sake on this earth. They have royal resources at their command. They

enjoy the king's bounty. They rejoice in the king's grace. Great is their reward here and now, and greater will be their reward hereafter. They have a kingdom in their hearts. The law of God is written there. God himself is at home there. Where God is the Kingdom is. They carry the King and the Kingdom with them wherever they go. They are blessed beyond all possibility of earthly blessedness because the kingdom of heaven is theirs here and now.

II. THE POOR IN SPIRIT. Who are these people who are thus beatified before they die and without any ecclesiastical vote on the question or any papal or other human authority? Jesus says, "They are the poor in spirit" first of all. What did he mean by that? The term he used had had a history. In the days of the prophets the poor were the ones who were being oppressed by the ruthless aristocracy of the land. By the time of the Exile the term stood for all Israel, pious but persecuted. Later it took on more and more of a religious connotation and was used to represent the God-fearing Jews, faithful to all the traditions of the race, as contrasted with the worldly and compromising majority of the people who were willing to accept the Hellenistic innova-

tions. For the most part these folks were poor as well as pious; and if they were poor in spirit, they were potential disciples, their temper was congenial to that of the Kingdom Jesus had come to preach. He begins with them.

1. *The Humble.* However, it is in the light of his own life and teachings that we feel sure of what he meant; and we are sure, first, that the poor in spirit were the quiet in the land, not the haughty and the arrogant and the proud but the humble and the lowly and the meek. Theophylact said, "Christ first lays as a foundation humility of mind, for seeing that on account of pride Adam fell, Christ raises us by humility." When Augustine was asked, "What is the first article in the Christian religion?" he answered, "Humility"; and when he was asked, "What is the second?" he said, "Humility"; and when he was asked, "What is the third?" he still answered, "Humility." It is true that "Lowliness is the base of every virtue, and who goes the lowest builds the safest." Jesus said it again and again, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted,"³ and Keble put it into his verse,

"God hath sworn to lift on high
Who sinks himself by true humility."

³Matt. 23. 12, Luke 14. 11, Luke 18. 14.

Benjamin Whichcote found the essence of religion here. He said: "Religion is not a system of doctrines, an observance of modes, a heat of affections, a form of words, a spirit of censoriousness. Religion is not a hear-say, a presumption, a supposition; is not a customary pretension and profession; is not an affectation of any mode; is not a piety of particular fancy, consisting in some pathetic devotions, vehement expressions, bodily severities, affected anomalies and aversions from the innocent usages of others; but consisteth in *a profound humility and an universal charity.*"

True humility is consistent with self-respect. ✓ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God, took a towel and girded himself and began to wash the disciples' feet.⁴ There is the classical example of genuine humility in human relationships. Jesus being in the form of God emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.⁵ There is the supreme example

⁴John 13. 3-5.

⁵Phil. 2. 5-8.

of true humility in human history. Jesus was born in a manger and lived among the poor and the obscure. He ministered to the diseased and the depraved. He made himself of no reputation. He was the servant of all. He was meek and lowly in spirit, and he incarnated the kingdom of heaven in his life. The poor in spirit are humble like their Lord.

2. *The Dependent.* Again, the poor in spirit are dependent upon God for every good and perfect gift. They look to him for daily bread and daily grace and guidance and truth and light. They do not rely upon themselves except as they may be empowered by him. They neither claim nor desire independence of the Father's provision for every need. They become as little children, that they may enter into the kingdom of heaven. They resign themselves to the Father's will. They are perfectly satisfied with the filial relationship. In the hour of their greatest triumph they give all the glory to God. They would rather have one smile from his face than all the honors which the world might heap upon them. They are emptied of all vain conceit because they have seen the King in his glory and they know that the glory of man is as the small dust of the balance in comparison. They are ready to bow the knee in genuine humility before

their continuous consciousness of the Majesty Divine.

It is their poverty of spirit which drives them to unceasing prayer. Jesus, again, is the best possible example. He was dependent upon the Father for everything. He prayed for guidance before choosing the twelve. He prayed for power before attempting to heal. He prayed for the renewal of his physical strength and for the unfailing supply of his spiritual need. He spent whole nights in prayer. He sometimes agonized in prayer. He was as dependent upon God as any man ever was. He realized that dependence and expressed it in his ceaseless petitions as no other man ever has. The poor in spirit are childlike in faith and unceasing in prayer and continuously conscious of their dependence upon God, even as Jesus was.

God is the strength of their heart and their portion forever. They rejoice in their confidence in him. All their help comes from him. All their trust is in him. They look to him for every blessing. They receive from him their every good. Their dependence is moral and spiritual. Their poverty is a voluntary and continuous internal state of will and mind and not necessarily an external economic status. They live the higher life and

seek those things which are above. They refuse to devote themselves to worldly aims, either in the making of money or in the winning of fame. Their blessedness does not consist in the quantity of their possessions, either intellectual or material. They do not trust in uncertain riches, but only in Him whose will for them they know to be their greatest good. They do not ignore the evil of this world, neither do they flee from it. In their present state, whatever that may be, they are dependent upon God and independent of all else.

3. *The Detached.* In the third place, the poor in spirit are characterized by a certain detachment from the things of this world. A social system which asks, "How much is a man worth?" and answers in terms of money or property values is not the system to which they give allegiance. To them money is of use only insofar as it can be made useful in the service of the Kingdom. They are willing to do with it and they are willing to do without it if it be God's will. They do not set their heart on the accumulation of wealth. They do not rest their hope on uncertain riches. Their hearts are set upon good service. Their hopes are rested upon the good pleasure of God. They are not grieved over the sacrifice of great

possessions. They are grieved only when anything hinders their following the Lord.

When Jesus asked the rich young ruler to follow him, he did not make it a condition that the young man should bring his wealth with him to be used in the support of the preachers and in the propagation of the evangel of the new cause. Jesus asked him to sell all he had and give it to the poor, if he would be a perfect follower of the meek and lowly One. Jesus seemed to think that one such example would be worth more to the cause than any contribution of material wealth possibly could become.

It would almost appear that detachment from worldly goods was a requirement of discipleship there in the beginning. The Galilæan fishermen left their boats and their nets to become apostles. Matthew forsook the receipt of customs and left all to follow Jesus. Zacchæus gave half his goods to the poor in celebration of his new allegiance. Paul suffered the loss of all things that he might become the bond-slave of Jesus. When the Hebrew Christians were despoiled of their goods they rejoiced in the knowledge that they had in their new faith a better and more enduring possession. The communism of the Pentecostal church witnessed to a real detachment

from the worship of Mammon in a sincere allegiance to the brotherhood of man in the service of the common Father and Lord.

Paul wrote to Timothy, "Charge them that are rich that they be not high-minded."⁶ It is the inevitable temptation accompanying great wealth. It is exceedingly difficult to be poor in spirit and rich in purse. The rich man has a host of servants about him. They care for his every need. They anticipate the least of his desires. They are dependent upon him for their salary, and they devote themselves to ministering to his pleasures and whims. Then he has an abundance of friends. Some of them honestly admire him as a business genius, a captain of industry. Some simply fawn upon him and continually flatter him as a possible benefactor, a purveyor of "pulls" or dispenser of gratuities.

The rich man is monarch of all he surveys, and as he sees himself surrounded by his crowds of retainers and dependents, it is difficult for him not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think. Menials can be poor in spirit, but it is more difficult for masters to be so.

Paul suggests that it is possible for the rich to be rich in good works, ready to distribute,

⁶1 Tim. 6. 17.

willing to share, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the true life.⁷ Sometimes this possibility is realized; but more often the rich are those who desire riches more than righteousness, who worship Mammon rather than God, and who in winning the world have risked or have realized the loss of their own souls.

It is easier for the poor not to be high-minded. It is easier for the poor not to be hard-hearted. Their own sufferings and hardships make them more sympathetic and compassionate. They are more responsive to spiritual appeals than those who are engrossed in the accumulation of material wealth. They are more sensitive to spiritual influences than those who are busied in the acquisition of earthly goods. They are more susceptible to and receptive of spiritual truth than those who are bent on being rich. Their spirits are apt to be more alert. They are less stolid and impervious to higher impulses and generous and self-forgetful moods.

4. *The Poverty of Jesus.* It is never to be forgotten that our Master himself, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, had a cattle crib for his cradle and the rough wood

⁷ 1 Tim. 6. 18, 19.

of the cross arm for his dying pillow, lived in a cottage instead of a palace, preferred the society of fishermen and publicans and sinners to that of the rulers and the nobles and the rich, never was married except to my Lady Poverty, and often did not know where he could lay his head for the night when the birds went to their nests and the foxes to their burrows. When he talked about penny wages for a day's labor and the price of sparrows in the market place, he was talking out of his own experience with the inadequate resources of the very poor. When he spoke about patching old garments and using old wineskins, he was thinking of the shifts of poverty in his own home. The loss of one piece of silver had been a great calamity there, even as it was in his parable. His mother had brought the gift of the poor to the Temple at the time of his birth. He never was able to bring anything but the gifts of the poor to the Temple at any time in his life.

Jesus was a poor man, the child of the laboring classes, a day laborer himself through his youth and young manhood, a recipient of charity in the days of his ministry. From birth to death he belonged to the proletariat; and that was not true either of Lenine or Marx. William Langland, in "Piers Plow-

man," put the truth of the matter concerning him into his verse,

"For our joy and our health, Jesus Christ of heaven
In a poor man's apparel pursueth us ever,
And looketh upon us in their likeness; and that
with lovely cheer
To know us by our kind heart."

For our joy and for our health; how and why is that? Is it not that we may know that our Master did not regard the getting of riches as a legitimate supreme ambition in life, but rather as a danger to spiritual growth? Is it not that we might realize from his example that the love of riches was the root of all evil and that they who would be rich by hook or by crook were sure to entangle themselves in many a snare, while only those who made the kingdom of God uppermost in all their endeavor were among the truly blessed of earth? Is it not that we may see clearly now that a system of society which makes wealth a criterion of social standing is un-Christian at heart and in truth, and that an economic situation in which competition for personal advantage is the law of business life and every man is for himself regardless of others cannot be made consistent with the teachings of our Master, and that as long as personal greed is considered the only sufficient incentive to

production, we dare not call ourselves his disciples or delude ourselves with the thought that his kingdom has come? A business world in which selfish competition is the rule is not a Christian world. A political world in which the best that can be hoped or attained is ratioed armament is not a Christian world.

A Christian will realize that Jesus was right when he said that a man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things which he possesses, but that true blessedness can be found in achieved character alone; and that the first characteristics of Christian character will be a humility of spirit which leads to a constant dependence upon God and results in a consequent detachment from any absorbing love of material things. The saint of God will rejoice in all the beauties of nature and art, but he will not be charmed by these into any forgetfulness of the service of God. All the wealth of the world will be as dust under his feet over which he will trample, if need be, in order to win Christ and his salvation. The interests of the Kingdom will be first in his regard, and all material things he will value or despise according to the degree in which they serve or hinder the Kingdom's advance in the world.

In the parable Lazarus was a poor beggar

who lay first at the rich man's gate and then in the place of honor next to Abraham at the heavenly feast, and that final reward was given him not because he had been a poor man here on earth, but because he had been poor in spirit, listening to and believing and receiving the truth he heard from Moses and the prophets and lying as a beggar at the gate of God's grace and enriched by all the bounty of God's table as long as he lived. The rich man had been satisfied with his fine clothes and his sumptuous fare and his luxurious living, and it never had occurred to him that he needed to be poor in spirit in order to be blessed here and hereafter.

There is the suggestion of the beggar in the Greek word which we translate "poor."⁸ Jesus said, "Blessed are the beggars in spirit," that is, those who are so detached from material things as to feel that all their truest wealth comes from God, and are so humble and dependent that they ask God for everything good. There was a certain lame man in Jerusalem who was a mendicant and when Peter and John came by his way he first asked an alms and then gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something from them.⁹ The

Beggar

⁸ πτωχοί.

⁹ Acts 3. 3-5.

poor in spirit are like that beggar—praying to God for everything they need and expecting to receive something from his hands every time they pray. They have no confidence in the arm of flesh. They never would think of begging from one another. They have all confidence in the goodness and the power of God and they never hesitate to ask anything of him. They beg and beg for more of God's spirit and more of God's grace and more of God's love; and they are blessed beyond any degree of worldly success in the constant answers to their ceaseless petitions.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for they are the ones who pray and who come to know all the blessedness of answered prayer. They have the key to all the treasures of God's grace. Their faith takes hold on all the promises. Have they forsaken all to follow God? Then God himself becomes their exceeding great reward. They have a peace which passeth understanding and a joy with which nothing in the world can interfere. They know the ineffable delight of uninterrupted communion with God the Father and with Jesus Christ their Saviour and his Son. They live in the presence of the King; they have full enjoyment of their inheritance; and the kingdom of heaven is theirs, with all its riches at

their disposal and all its exhaustless treasures at their command.

Such are the people who are citizens of the kingdom of heaven; and they are the best citizens of any city or any government on earth. They serve the heavenly King wherever they may be, in the home and in the school, in business and in politics, in palaces or in dungeons. Wherever the providence of God may take them they have no personal interests to serve and no indirect aims to distract them. In public life they will be cheerful, humble, devoted, upright, the very antipodes of scheming politicians. In commercial life they will be industrious and honest, straightforward and honorable in all their business dealings, trusted and trustworthy in every transaction, the very opposites of their greedy and crooked competitors. In student life they will not be arrogant in erudition, proud of their attainment, apt to teach and slow to learn, but humble in research, anxious for the truth and not counting themselves to have attained but simply pressing toward the goal. They will be the best people in any community. They will be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. They will bring the kingdom of heaven into human relationships. They will introduce it here among

men. They will establish it forever in the race.

We have now defined the poor in spirit as those, first, who are characterized by a true humility of heart and mind, a lowliness of disposition which is content to minister rather than to be ministered unto, a willingness to take the lower rather than the higher places, voluntarily relinquishing unworthy ambitions and worldly honors and thereby deserving and winning the approbation and the reward of high heaven. In the second place, the poor in spirit are those who continually realize their absolute dependence upon God and who prove that realization in their unceasing prayer. In the third place, they put first things first and in their devotion to the kingdom of God and his righteousness they show a certain detachment from the motives and impulses which sway the worldly and the sensual mind.

They find their well-being, not in earthly goods, but in Christian character. They are comparatively indifferent to external conditions. They are supremely interested only in the abiding approval of God.

They are not worried about material prosperity. They are not anxious to get rich. Yet they are rich in all the good things of the

Kingdom. They have the comfort and the inheritance of the earth, and the spiritual filling and satisfaction, and the mercy, and the filial relation to God and the sight of God which these beatitudes promise. They are rich in love and joy and peace. They are rich in self-control and a heart at rest. They are rich toward God and rich in themselves and therefore rich in good examples and influence toward their fellowmen. Theirs is the kingdom of heaven, and it is theirs to dispense the good things of the Kingdom to all whom they meet.

These are the positive characteristics which the poor in spirit possess.

It may be well to suggest on the negative side that they are not necessarily poor in this world's goods. Poverty in itself is no blessing. It becomes a blessing only when it aids a man to become poor in spirit. In itself poverty may be a plague. Samuel Johnson said of it, "Poverty is a great enemy to human happiness; it certainly destroys liberty, and it makes some virtues impracticable and others extremely difficult." It tempts to mendicancy and to murmuring. It restricts the range of personal possibilities. It tempts to narrowness of outlook corresponding to one's meagerness of means.

Victor Hugo spoke of it as "an admirable and terrible trial, from which the weak come forth infamous and the strong sublime." He might have said the very same thing about wealth. Poverty and wealth are not curses or blessings in themselves. They each have their advantages and their disadvantages. It depends altogether upon how they are accepted and used. They may help a man to heaven or to hell, as he masters them in his spirit or permits them to master him. A man may be poor in spirit, although rich in material goods. The poor man will find it easier to be poor in spirit as well; but poverty in spirit is not necessarily connected with poverty of means. It may be compatible with wealth but never with trust in wealth.

Again, poverty in spirit is not necessarily poverty of spirit, spiritlessness, spinelessness, lack of energy and backbone. It is not meanness of disposition and feebleness of character. The poor in spirit are not poor-spirited and cowardly, weaklings without grit or spunk or manly vigor in conduct or life. On the contrary, if we have been right in our definition of their character, the poor in spirit have been among the strongest and most heroic of men. They have displayed an indomitable purpose of will. Their backbones

have been inflexible in defense of the right. They have been courageous even unto crucifixion or any other horrible form of martyrdom and death. They are not disposed to take much account of personal slights or wrongs, but any invasion of righteousness or any violation of justice or any profanation of the truth makes them fearless champions of the right and undaunted and unconquerable warriors for the good.

They have little or no confidence in themselves, but they have all confidence in the God who fights with them and for them, and that faith makes them courageous and invincible. Jesus was no weakling. He said to his disciples, "Be of good courage; I have overcome."¹⁰ Paul was no weakling. He wrote to the Corinthians, "Thanks be unto God who always giveth us the victory."¹¹ With poverty in spirit and through terrific struggle they triumphed over every foe. Weaker men would have gone to the wall in their circumstances. They were of more heroic mold.

5. *Basis of All.* We said that the promise attached to the first and the last of the beatitudes was understood with all the rest. It is the all-inclusive blessedness upon which all

¹⁰John 16. 33.

¹¹1 Cor. 15. 57. 2 Cor. 2. 14.

other blessings depend. It is equally clear that this first characteristic of the blessed ones is the basis of all the characteristics which follow it. The poor in spirit are those who mourn over their own deficiencies and over the sins of the world. They have all the passions and emotions of other men, but they have them under control, and as masters of themselves they can be meek in their behavior to their fellows. In the sense of their utter dependence upon God they hunger and thirst for the filling which he alone can give. As Paul said, they are "poor, yet making many rich," for they are generous with what they have both of worldly goods and of spiritual wealth. They are merciful to all. Poverty in spirit, with its detachment from all unworthy ambitions and selfish aims, leads to the emptying of self and the filling with all purity of heart and all divine illumination.

It is disinterested in judgment and so capable of mediating in disputes and making peace between those distrustful of each other but mutually confident that its decision will be unbiased and just and right. Then, last of all, in a world like this its very lack of self-assertion will tempt those who are evil-minded to impose upon it and to persecute it. It will be reviled for its pusillanimity,

and other evil charges will be brought against it falsely, because of its very loyalty to the ideals of the Kingdom and the demands of the Christian profession and name. All these aspects of the Christian character root in the first, and grow out of it as naturally as the seed from the soil. All the blessedness which belongs to all of these belongs in all of its fullness to the first. The Master was right when he said first of all, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The poor in spirit are richest of men.

6. *Illustrations.* It would be easy to illustrate this truth from the pages of the Book itself. Herod lived in the palace and the Eastern magi visited him there. They looked about them and found all the livery of royalty on every hand. Soldiers and servants, chariots and horses, rich food and luxurious furnishing, all the things which the mind of man could imagine or desire for comfort or display were to be seen there. Nothing was lacking but a sense of lack in anything worth having and enjoying for selfish pleasure in life. There was neither poverty in resources nor poverty in spirit in that palace; and the King of the new kingdom of heaven was not to be found there.

The wise men turned away from all the

trappings of royalty in Jerusalem and went out to Bethlehem and there they found a woman, the betrothed of a carpenter of Nazareth, who in all humility of spirit had said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." She lay in the stable straw, but she had at her breast the King! Later she sang: "He hath showed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from thrones, and exalted those of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away."¹² Herod's line was soon overthrown; Mary's Son is to inherit the earth. The proud were scattered; the poor in spirit received the kingdom of heaven and all its gracious gifts.

Over in the home of the high priest the scribes and the elders were gathered together to determine where the king of the Jews would be born. They had all the books and the parchments and they knew all that the authorities had said on that subject. They were the wise and their word would be regarded as law in the matter. They were rich and increased with goods and had need of nothing. They were satisfied with their position among

¹²Luke 1. 51-53.

the people. They were not poor in spirit; they were proud and arrogant. They put heavy burdens upon others, but they never put the tips of their fingers under the burdens themselves. They thought they had an exclusive monopoly of God's kingdom on earth. They did not know that they were wretched and miserable and poor and naked and blind and knew little or nothing of the kingdom of heaven.

They had some servants out on the hills tending sheep for the Temple sacrifices, fellows ignorant of the law, common folk and despised. They were humble and poor and their one wish was to love God truly and serve him faithfully as long as they lived. To these men, poor in pocket and poor in spirit, was the first gospel preached, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour who is Christ the Lord."¹³

A Pharisee went up into the Temple to pray, but his prayer was not that of one poor in spirit. It was full of self-congratulations and boasting. The publican who stood afar off and cried for mercy was the one who went down to his home justified rather than the other. Simeon and Anna belonged to the quiet in the land. They were poor in spirit

¹³Luke 2. 11.

and longing for the redemption of Israel, and to them came the revelation of the King. It is the lesson of the whole Book. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be abased."¹⁴

7. *The Worldly Idea.* This is not the belief of the man of the world. He knows that the way to success is through self-advertisement. He knows that people are apt to take you at your own valuation. He knows that the only way to get on in the world is to push your own interests at every opportunity. He looks out for number one. He is a climber, and he gets into the high seats in society or in business mainly by his own efforts and as the reward of his own ceaseless exertion. He is after money, rank, fame, sensation; and he believes that only the violent take these by force. So he strives and cries, and his voice is heard in the streets and in all public places until he becomes conspicuous by pure blatancy. He believes in the motto of the Birmingham Corporation Bank, "He who has, is." He believes that with a hard heart and a good digestion he can live as happily as any man.

He despises the poor in spirit who prefer a quiet retreat to the limelight. He cannot

¹⁴Matt. 23. 12.

understand a man who has a chance to get rich and because of some scruples does not take it. He has no use for a man who refuses to fight for his rights and to claim and maintain his own proper consideration. To him humility is absurd and contemptible and meekness is weakness and poverty in spirit just as bad as poverty in purse; and he labors and prays to be delivered from both. He has no conception of any blessedness belonging to either, and to him it is nonsense for anyone to say, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." He does not know much about the kingdom of heaven anyway. It seems to him rather a shadowy institution. He does not know just where it is located, and he is reasonably sure that it cannot be hypothecated either at discount or at par for cash value; and cash value is the only real value to him.

8. *The Challenge of Jesus.* In the first statement of his sermon, this young carpenter Evangelist threw down a challenge to the pushing, selfish, aggressive, worldly spirit and declared that it was alien to the spirit of the kingdom which he had come to proclaim. He said, "He who has, is—a fool, if he relies upon what he has in material possessions for blessedness. Blessedness is not to be found

in nearness to the throne but in likeness to the King, not in pride and prominence and power but in poverty of spirit resulting in readiness for service." Anyone who desired above all things to be rich, to make money, to gain personal position or fame, could not be poor in spirit at the same time. Anyone who was so self-reliant as to live a prayerless life could not be poor in spirit at the same time. Anyone whose life was not constantly characterized by true humility could not remain a citizen of the kingdom of heaven.

Here is a new ideal of blessedness. Blessedness would be found not in lording it over one's fellows but in being the servant of all. Blessedness would come not to the proud in spirit but to the poor in spirit. Blessedness would be the lot of the humble poor and, if such could be found, of the unselfish rich. There would be blessedness in detachment from the world and dependence upon God. It was nearly the exact opposite of the ordinary conception of human happiness. It must have startled those who heard it and challenged their own ambitions and provoked their serious thought. Could the kingdom of heaven be theirs if they were arrogant and haughty, self-centered and prayerless, setting their hearts on wealth or fame? This young Lay-

man from Nazareth declared it could not. He said that the kingdom of heaven belonged to the poor in spirit, and to them alone. That was surprising enough; but his next statement must have been more surprising still.

CHAPTER II

THE SECOND BEATITUDE

1. *The Paradox.* Jesus went on to say, "*Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.*" Mourning and blessedness! How could these two be conjoined? How could they be compatible with each other? If the first statement had been rather startling, this statement must have seemed pure paradox. The sorrowful were the unhappy. The mourners were the miserable. Blessedness would be found in an escape from the sorrows and miseries of existence. These poor people were looking for one who would deliver them from these things, one who would give them a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

Instead of promising them deliverance from all the ills that flesh is heir to, this young man was saying that they might be happy in the midst of their sorrows and that they might be blessed in the midst of their miseries and of their mourning because of them. How could that be? He had said that he had a

gospel to preach, glad tidings for all people, joy to the world. What sort of a gospel of joy was this which began with pronouncing a benediction upon mourning, which said that you might be sorrowful and yet always rejoicing? That surely was too paradoxical to be taken seriously. Jesus could not mean what he said. He surely must be dealing in Oriental hyperbole. He could not intend any sober truth by a statement like that. Many must have thought that in the company there on the Galilæan mountain slope, and many have thought that ever since their day. They feel that paradoxes are poor spiritual provender.

2. *Mourning.* Clement, Chrysostom, Theophylact, Jerome, and others among the church fathers were sure that the mourning of this beatitude could be only the mourning for sin, and Achelis and Tholuck have followed them in this interpretation. Those who mourned over their own sins and the sins of others might find comfort in forgiveness. They might have their mourning turned into joy. Augustine, Luther, Calvin, and Ibbeken among the later commentators, thought in this connection only of the sorrow caused by suffering and distress. Why do we need to limit it in any way? Jesus made no limitations. Why should we?

There is one limitation as a matter of course. The mourning must not be immoral in itself. All these beatitudes are pronounced upon moral people and good people. Jesus does not consider the possibility of blessedness for any other sort. He began with the poor in spirit who come into the present possession of the kingdom of heaven, and it is to these that he says, "Blessed are you who mourn, for you shall be comforted."

There is an immoral mourning; the mourning of those who are determined to be rich and who pierce themselves through with many sorrows, the mourning of the young ruler who went away sorrowful because he had great possessions and it would be a greater grief to him to part from them than to part with Jesus, the mourning of Ahab because he could not have the vineyard of Naboth, the mourning of Jonah because of the gourd that withered and the God who would be gracious and kind even at the expense of the fulfillment of the prophet's threatenings of woe—all mourning which has for its motive and source any form of covetousness or selfishness or pride or envy or cherished sin. There is no promise that such mourning will find any comfort either in the kingdom of heaven or out of it.

There is no inherent blessedness in mourning as such. If anybody voluntarily indulges in mourning, simply enjoys poor health, chooses to be low-spirited, believes it is more pious to be miserable than to be happy, feels religious only when in the doleful dumps, and so manages to make others as miserable as himself, he may find a degree of satisfaction in his success in maintaining his misery or propagating it in word and example, but he is really neither blessed nor a blessing. Mourning self-caused and self-indulgent is sinful and selfish, and no blessedness can be pronounced upon it.

Having made this self-evident exception, and turning to the heirs of the kingdom of heaven as the only people now addressed, we are inclined to think that no limitation need be put upon the causes of their mourning. It may come from their own failings and imperfections and transgressions or from the sins of others or it may be from any affliction in body, mind, or soul, any earthly sorrow or unavoidable grief from the oppressions of society, the injustices of government, the inevitableness of nature's laws; it may be from God or man, from heaven or earth; it may be from any cause or any source, and to the poor in spirit who are the faithful children of God

and the disciples of Jesus it may be a blessing!¹

It goes without saying that all men some time or other will mourn. There is no escape from affliction and trial in this life. Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward. He has good reason for mourning as long as he lives.

“Men die, but sorrow never dies—
The crowding years divide in vain:
And the whole world is knit with ties
Of common brotherhood in pain.”

To many nature seems to furnish sufficient cause for mourning all their days. No one has written a more grimly unsparing and despairing indictment of natural law than John Stuart Mill in his *Essay on Nature*, in which he says: “Killing, the most criminal act recognized by human laws, nature does once to every being that lives; and in a large proportion of cases, after protracted tortures such as only the greatest monsters whom we read of ever purposely inflicted on their fellow creatures. . . . Nature impales men, breaks them as if on the wheel, casts them to be devoured by wild beasts, burns them to death, crushes them with stones like the

¹So Votaw, “all those experiences of life which bring sadness and sorrow to man,” and also Bernhard Weiss.

first Christian martyr, starves them with hunger, freezes them with cold, poisons them by the quick or slow venom of her exhalations, and has hundreds of other hideous deaths in reserve, such as the ingenious cruelty of a Nabis or a Domitian never surpassed. All this, nature does with the most supercilious disregard both of mercy and justice, emptying her shafts upon the best and noblest indifferently with the meanest and worst; upon those who are engaged in the highest and worthiest enterprises; and often as the direct consequences of the noblest acts, and it might almost be imagined, as a punishment for them. She mows down those on whose existence hangs the well-being of a whole people, perhaps the prospects of the human race for generations to come, with as little compunction as those whose death is a relief to themselves or a blessing to those under their noxious influence. Such are nature's dealings with life. Even when she does not intend to kill, she inflicts the same tortures in apparent wantonness. In the clumsy provision she has made for the perpetual renewal of animal life, rendered necessary by the prompt termination she puts to it in every individual instance, no human being ever comes into the world but another being is literally stretched

on the rack for hours and days, not unfrequently issuing in death. . . . Everything, in short, which the worst men commit against life or property is perpetrated on a larger scale by natural agents. Nature has Noyades more fatal than those of Carrier; her explosions of fire-damp are as destructive as human artillery; her plague and cholera far surpass the poison cups of the Borgias."

Making all allowance for any bias of mind in the writer, it still remains true that Mill's indictment in the main particulars represents the facts of the case. Nature often has stern and forbidding aspects and every man is subject to natural law. Disease comes to some and death comes to all. The pestilence and the plague are no respecters of persons. They sweep the entire community and force their way into the homes of the good and the bad. There are accidents and disasters which cripple the strong and make the rich poor in a moment of time. Disappointment waits for every man at every turn in the way. Pain and bereavement are the common lot, and if anyone is spared, he knows that his turn may come on any day.

Vice makes its victims suffer, and the innocent are involved with the guilty ones. There are weakness of body and sickness of soul. As

age approaches the mind is less elastic and the body less reliable, and friends pass away and leave the life pilgrim lonely at the last. All men have reason to mourn over the sins of themselves and of others and because of the sufferings and afflictions inevitable in human life. There is no exemption. All are mourners; but Jesus said that the poor in spirit who were in possession of the kingdom of heaven would find comfort in their sorrow and triumph in tribulation and could rejoice when other men naturally would be depressed because by the grace of God the very things which in themselves would bring suffering and sorrow could be transformed into sources of joy. How can that be?

3. *Submission.* That is possible because in the first place the poor in spirit will accept their sorrows submissively. That does not mean that they will make no effort to right things which are wrong or to prevent disease or calamity where it is possible, but when, in spite of all which they can do, calamity, disease, or sorrow of any sort comes upon them, they do not foolishly and futilely rebel against it and fret and fume and become furious over what cannot be helped, but they make the best of it, ask for God's goodness and help in the midst of it, and use it to

test God's faithfulness and power to bless and comfort and heal and restore. They make of their sorrows stepping-stones into the higher life. They make of their afflictions altars of worship and praise to God. They turn their miseries into means of advancement in the knowledge of spiritual things. They turn their troubles into trellises along which the vines of their faith may climb into the abiding sunshine of the Father's presence and love.

4. *Comfort.* They are not like those who comfort themselves in the delusion that sin and suffering and sorrow do not exist, and they are not like the old Stoics, who stubbornly stood out against all calamities in the arrogant strength of the human will, and who in the cultivation of an inhuman or superhuman apathy refused to acknowledge any adversity as having any power over them. They neither deny the actual nor resist its appeal. They mourn in sincerity, but with equal sincerity they regard their sorrows as opportunities to exercise the grace of submission and the virtues of patience and humility and faith.

They know that God is their loving Father and that he has promised to make all things work together for their good. They know

that all their sorrows may help rather than hinder their spiritual life. They know that God's grace will make it possible for them to say with the psalmist, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted."² They know that despite all their reasons for mourning they may have present spiritual victory and they will have future deliverance. They rejoice in that promise of the Apocalypse, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes . . . and there shall be no more mourning, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."³ They rejoice still more because in their submission and patience and humility and faith they find comfort; for in the exercise of these graces they find God. In the sick chamber or in the death chamber they come face to face with him and they feel the influences of eternity touching their spirits to higher issues and finer things.

There are those who in sickness fail to find God and in sorrow fall away from him, and nothing can be sadder than sickness and sorrow which have this result; but the poor in spirit in the midst of their mourning find their sympathies enlarged and their natures

²Psa. 119. 71.

³Rev. 21. 45.

enriched, and thereafter they are able to comfort others with the comfort wherewith they have been comforted and in their added tenderness and helpfulness they find themselves consoled and blessed. The God who may have seemed afar off in the day of prosperity becomes a personal Friend in the day of adversity and the hour of need. In all our afflictions he is afflicted, and he supports and upholds and fills the heart with such a divine comfort that even the affliction is seen to be a help to heaven. In the renewed and increased consciousness of his presence and aid there is a comfort which the unsorrowing never may know. If we mourn over our sins, we know that he is a Saviour from sin. If we mourn over any other unavoidable calamity or disability, we comfort ourselves with the thought that it is the Father's appointment, and he knows what is best for us and he will make all things work together for our good.

We read of David in the cave of Adullam that he gathered about him all who were in debt and in distress and with any discontent of heart and he made himself captain over them. In like manner our King calls to him all those who labor and are heavy-laden, all the poor and crippled who suffer from disa-

bilities of any kind, and he takes their sicknesses upon himself, and he bears their burdens with them, and he promises and gives them comfort and rest. Those who come unto him are grieved because of their sorrows and sins, but they are glad that he is with them to enable them to triumph over these things through faith. They do not mourn as those who have no hope, but they are comforted as those who have present grace and a sure hope of better things. They know that the very things which cause them to mourn also help them to grow in grace. They know that these things bring them to God and that they find all-sufficient comfort in him. They are blessed above their fellows in the presence and comfort divine.

CHAPTER III

THE THIRD BEATITUDE

DID the first beatitude seem like a startling statement, so contrary was it to the common thought of man? Did the second beatitude seem like pure paradox, talking about mourning and blessedness in one breath? The third beatitude must have seemed to those hearers on the mountaintop still more startling and paradoxical than the former ones. Jesus said, "*Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*" There was no sign of it in their day. When had it ever been true? The Romans had conquered the world not by meekness but by might of arms. The Herodians in Palestine were characterized not by meekness but by meanness and ruled not by love but by ruthless power and pride and hate. In a world where might was right the meek never inherited anything. All the good things of this earth went to those who were ready to seize upon them by violence and force.

I. PREPARATION. Yet the minds of those Palestinian peasants may have been prepared for this statement of Jesus because they had

read practically the same thing in their book of Psalms. Here more nearly than anywhere else in the beatitudes, Jesus quotes from the ancient Scriptures, for the psalmist had said, "The meek shall inherit the earth."¹ In the Old Testament the meek were those who did well and suffered for it, taking it patiently. They were the poor and the oppressed in the land who suffered and were silent, not taking vengeance themselves but looking to God for help. They had not inherited the earth, but the psalmist had promised that some time they would. Jesus simply repeats the psalmist's promise at this time.

Had not the Lord said, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word"?² The meek were those who were submissive to God's will. God would bring to naught the proud and arrogant, but to the meek he promised the inheritance of the land. The psalmist had written it, "Evildoers shall be cut off; but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth,"³ and again the psalmist had promised, "The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he

¹Psa. 37. 11.

²Isa. 66. 2.

³Psa. 37. 9.

teach his way. . . . His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.”⁴ The Old Testament had both the promise and the type.

Moses was the type of meekness, and these Jewish hearers would be apt to think of him. He had not inherited the promised land, but that was because of his single failure in meekness. He might have gone on into Canaan with Caleb and Joshua if he had been meek all the time. Moses was the greatest man in their history, and the history said of him that he was the meekest man who ever lived. He was a strong character and his meekness was an achievement. It was not natural to him in early life. He murdered in hot anger when he slew the Egyptian in his youth. In utter exasperation he threw down the tables of the law in the prime of his days. He was as short-tempered as any man in the beginning. It was a word and a blow with him, and he did not stop short of murder when he was mad.

He was by nature as impatient and passionate as any man, but he was disciplined through the years; and at last under any provocation he retained his self-control. He was the most plagued of mortals and he was the

⁴Psa. 25. 9, 13.

most patient. He had as much temper as ever, but he was strong enough not to let himself go. It is weakness which gives way to the flood of passion surging in the soul. It is meekness which feels the passion but controls the flood and curbs the tongue and keeps an unruffled demeanor. Only a strong character can do that. Anybody can let himself go. Moses was a great organizer, general, legislator, and saint. In all meekness he shrank from the responsibility which God would put upon him in the beginning, but once having assumed that responsibility, there never was any shrinking from the consequences with him.

He might be criticized in his domestic life, and his leadership might be questioned by those who stood nearest to him and who ought to have been his greatest help, and the people for whom he had sacrificed everything might be ungrateful and murmuring again and again; but Moses was meek above all men on the face of the earth and he bore with them with all gentleness and longsuffering through the steady strain of the years in the wilderness. It was a conquest of character. It was a triumph of grace. Moses was great in many ways, but he had been greatest of all in his meekness.

When God-appointed duties had to be performed Moses was as strong as a lion. Where only personal matters were concerned Moses was meek as a lamb. The example of Moses had made one thing clear to the Jewish people, that great strength of character and great meekness of disposition were not inconsistent with each other. They could believe that in all matters of lesser importance or merely personal affairs one could be gentle as a dove, while at the same time in all matters where principle was at stake he would be firm as a rock. That had been true of the great heroes of the Old Testament history and that would be true of the great heroes and martyrs of the New Testament church. That would be true most of all of the Christ.

The people who listened to the great sermon in the early morning of that spring day probably did not realize that the prophet like unto Moses stood there before them. They did not know that Moses and Jesus would be the two great examples of meekness in Jewish history and in the later Sacred Book. They did not know that meekness would become one of the outstanding characteristics of Jesus and that it would be the only grace which he would invite all men to study in him, when he would say to them, "Learn of

me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.”⁵ He was the best example men ever would know of the two graces with which he begins these beatitudes, “Blessed are the poor in spirit” and “Blessed are the meek.”

“The best of men
That e’er wore earth about him, was a sufferer,
A soft, meek, patient, humble, tranquil spirit,
The first true gentleman that ever breathed.”

It was his spirit of lowliness and meekness which he asked all men to learn of him. Peter said of him after his death that when he was reviled he reviled not again, and when he suffered he threatened not, and it was in that connection that Peter declared that he had left us an example that we should follow in his steps.⁶ We need only to look unto Jesus and Moses to see that meekness is not weakness.

II. MEEKNESS DEFINED. The meekness of this beatitude is not tameness, pliability, docility, deficiency of spirit, lack of energy. It is not the disposition of the donkey. It is not the calmness of the camel. It is not mere sluggishness or apathy. It is not natural mildness or timidity. The weak character which shrinks from conflict of any kind, the

⁵Matt. 11. 29.

⁶1 Pet. 2. 21-23.

yielding disposition which gives up without a struggle, is only a counterfeit of the meekness praised by Jesus. His meekness and the meekness of Moses is the meekness of strength. It is not the meekness of weak knees but the meekness of the strong will and the fiery temper. It is the meekness of the independent judgment and the inflexible decision.

It is not the meekness of the apathetic or the phlegmatic character, but the meekness of the sensitive and volcanic nature which is controlled by grace. It is not the meekness of the man of naturally placid and amiable disposition, but of the man who finds it most difficult to submit and be silent when he is thwarted and opposed, but who nevertheless does not break out into anger or sink back into sullenness because in prayer and self-discipline he has schooled himself to consider and to imitate the goodness of God and the meekness of Jesus. God deals gently with all, even when they are his enemies. Jesus never lost his patience or his self-control.

The meekness of this beatitude demands strength and courage in a high degree. One cannot be tranquil and unruffled in the face of provocation and trial, one cannot endure insult calmly and serenely, one cannot turn

the other cheek when smitten unjustly, one cannot pray for those who persecute maliciously and do good to those who persistently do evil, unless he has a strength beyond mere human strength, unless he is capable of a self-conquest beyond that to which the natural man ever can attain. The martyrs who suffer without flinching and whose meekness never fails are the crowned masters among men, the heroes of the race. They have had indomitable fortitude and supernatural grace. In their weakness they have had God-given strength.

George Matheson once wrote, "What is the difference between the gentleness of Ruth and the gentleness of John?" and then he answered his own question by saying, "Ruth's was a matter of birthright; John's was a matter of conquest. Ruth's was temperament; John's was grace. Ruth's was planting; John's was supplanting." The supernatural meekness of this beatitude is a growth, a development from weakness into strength, the product of divine discipline, the gift of divine grace.

We have said that the meekness Jesus meant is not weakness, but the evidence of the highest degree of strength. We are ready now to define its characteristics more closely.

1. *Humility.* First of all, it must root itself in true humility. It is the strength of the poor in spirit, dependent upon God and praying to him for help; it is not proud and self-sufficient. It is the strength of the one who is able to put himself and all that relates to himself in the second place when need be. It is the strength of the man who does not think too highly of himself or of his claims or his rights or his dignities or his position in life. A meek man will not be proud in his demeanor and carriage toward others. He will not be characterized by self-assumption. He will not be full of self-assertion. He will not be vainglorious. He may be a ruler, but he will be considerate of all. He may be a bishop, but he will be the willing servant of all. He will not be arrogant in behavior, resentful of any slight to his personal prerogatives, demanding subservience rather than brotherly co-operation in love.

He will not be religiously proud, thanking God that he has attained to a higher state of grace than many of his brethren. He will not be intellectually proud, congratulating himself on his superior cleverness or his surpassing knowledge. He will not be socially proud, delighting in his aristocracy of birth and breeding. Least of all will he be purse-

proud, claiming any special consideration because of his wealth or any lavish expenditure. He will be a humble brother to any man. He will be the meek servant of all. Does anyone think this is easy of attainment? It requires courage and consecration. It demands self-control and self-sacrifice. It requires obedience to the Highest in all things. It does the will of God at all costs and at all hazards. It resists all temptation to yield to superciliousness and arrogance.

(1) In the Church. There is that old story in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* which has its lesson for our time as well. Augustine had come to England to propagate the Christian faith, as a missionary sent out by Rome. He found a church already established there. A meeting was arranged at which seven of its bishops and many of its learned men were to confer with Augustine about a union of their forces. They went first to a holy hermit who had a great reputation for discretion and they asked him whether they ought to forsake their traditions at the behest of this new-comer to their land.

He said, "If he is a man of God, follow him." They answered, "How shall we know?" and the holy man replied, "Our Lord saith, 'Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for

I am meek and lowly in heart'; if, therefore, Augustine is meek and lowly in heart, it is to be believed that he has taken upon him the yoke of Christ, and offers the same to you. But if he is stern and haughty, it appears that he is not of God, and you are not to regard his words." They asked again, "How shall we know this?" and the hermit answered, "Arrange that he may arrive first with his company at the place where the synod is to be held; and if at your approach he rises up to greet you hear him submissively, being assured that he is the servant of Christ; but if he despises you, and does not rise to greet you, whereas you are more in number, let him also be despised of you." They followed his advice and Augustine received them sitting in his chair; and they refused to recognize his authority and there was a schism in the Christian forces in England from the very start.

If the Christian Church ever is to be a united church, it will be because meekness has become the dominant characteristic in all of its many present branches. The meek and lowly Christ would scarcely feel at home with some of the spiritual lords of the present day. In their trappings and in their bearing they are more like the rulers of this world than

like the Master. Their rich robes are not like his simple garments. Their luxurious living is not like his simple fare. Their pomp and pretension do not remind us of him.

No one branch of the church can claim infallible authority and ask all others to bow before it. No one communion can claim ecclesiastical authority and ask all others to accept its ordination. Almost all the schisms of church history could have been avoided if there had been meekness of spirit on both sides involved. There must be a meekness of spirit which will recognize all Christians as brothers with equal rights to all church privileges before there can be any reunion of the scattered and measurably ineffective forces of Christendom to-day. There must be humility of spirit instead of haughtiness of bearing. There must be a measure of meekness leading to mutual recognition and respect before there can be any genuine co-operation such as will insure the conquest of the world for Christ.

(2) In Science. Conquest comes through humility; it is the lesson which science has been teaching us through all the centuries. Huxley wrote to Kingsley: "Science seems to me to teach in the highest and strongest manner the great truth which is embodied in the Christian conception of entire surrender

to the will of God. Sit down before the facts as a little child, be prepared to give up every preconceived notion, follow humbly wherever Nature leads, or you shall learn nothing. I have only begun to learn content and peace of mind since I have resolved, at all risks, to do this." In all meekness of spirit the scientist must be willing to be taught even as a little child before he can enter upon the inheritance of the knowledge of the earth's resources.

Bacon stated the great truth when he said, "Nature can be controlled only by being obeyed." Natural powers cannot be exploited by those who are ignorant of nature's laws. In all meekness they must be studied and in all humility they must be obeyed before their inheritance can be enjoyed. The greatest of the scientists have been the most humble of men. The more they know, the more they know there is to be known. Like Newton, they feel that they are but children playing with pebbles and shells on the shore of the limitless, fathomless deep. After a lifetime of study they realize that their little brains have not begun to comprehend the infinite works of God. In their measure they feel as Isaiah did when he had the vision of the glory of the Lord in the temple. They are ready

to fall upon their faces and confess their utter inadequacy in deepest humility of soul; and it is only to those in that attitude that the prophetic insight and commission are given. The prophets of science are humble souls.

There is such a thing as the sovereignty of innocence. Children sometimes rule us by this power alone. Isaiah pictures the coming day when savage natures shall be tamed, and he says that in that time "a little child shall lead them."⁷ Chesterton declares that innocence has about it something terrible which in the long run makes and remakes empires and the world. It is the meekness and the innocence of the child-spirit which give the poet and the prophet all their sovereignty. They inherit the earth through these qualities alone.

(3) In the Individual. Meekness is not natural to many men. Humility is hard to attain. In his autobiography Benjamin Franklin tells us that he once seriously aimed at moral perfection. He thought he knew what was right and what was wrong and he saw no good reason why he might not always do the one and avoid the other. So he made a chart of the virtues, twelve in number, and across the pages of a little book he drew in

⁷Isa. 11. 6.

red ink twelve lines for these virtues and down each page seven lines for the days of the week, and then in the square thus formed he marked with a black spot any fault he might discover in himself in any of these virtues on any day. His list of virtues was in this order: Temperance, Silence, Order, Resolution, Frugality, Industry, Sincerity, Justice, Moderation, Cleanliness, Tranquillity, Chastity. These virtues seemed to him to cover all that was necessary and desirable in human character.

Thinking it best not to attempt too much, he decided to fix his attention upon one virtue for a week and, when he had satisfied himself as far as it was concerned, to pass on to another until he had completed the list. He showed his plan to a Quaker friend, who gently reminded him that he had omitted the practice of the grace of humility! Franklin promptly added it to the list, but he put it at the bottom as number thirteen, to be cultivated after he had mastered the rest! One wonders if he ever came to know the blessedness of the meek. Self-sufficiency never will reach it. Mere morality will neither appreciate it nor realize it. It is a divine gift. It is a miraculous endowment. No man will be ready to sacrifice his own rights and to make

himself of no reputation unless he has the grace of Moses and Jesus, given him by the constant communion of his spirit with the Most High. Meekness is the condition of the acceptance of this grace. Humility lies at the very foundation of the blessed life. It is not the last but the first of the virtues in the kingdom of heaven.

2. *Patient Endurance.* In the first place, the meek will be humble in spirit; and, in the second place, they will suffer wrongs without resorting to retaliation. They will follow Paul's advice and rather take wrong and be defrauded than to go to law with one another.⁸ They will know that the Preacher of the Old Testament was right when he said, "Yielding pacifieth great offenses,"⁹ and they will believe that it is good policy as well as good principle to yield rather than to resist on many occasions. It is the soft answer which often turns away wrath. It is non-resistance to evil which frequently puts evil to shame and to flight. Lange says, "Christian love must make us willing to bear twice as much as the world in its injustice could demand." It disarms the foe and it makes us like our Lord. Meekness is strong enough

⁸1 Cor. 6. 7.

⁹Eccl. 10. 4.

not to strike back. It will forgive and endure. It will make allowances for sudden heat and words spoken or things done in anger. It will wait for a quieter moment and a better mood. Blessed are the gentle-men and the gentle-women. They bless all with whom they come in contact and they themselves are supremely blessed.

It is hard for the ordinary man to conceive that. He believes in standing up for his own rights and not allowing anybody to impose upon him. He thinks that the aggressive and the grasping get the good things of life, and the meek get nothing but insults and the leavings of the more militant souls. He believes in an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. He believes in taking revenge until wrong-doers find that it is not safe to try to take advantage of him. His morals are the morals of all the nations to-day. They believe in preparedness, a preparedness to take swift requital for every attempted injury, and they think that anything else would be foolishness or cowardice or indolence.

Democritus said, "It is the work of prudence to prevent an injury, and of indolence, when it is done, not to revenge it." Cicero made it a maxim of conduct that no one should hurt another unless he was first pro-

voked by some injury;¹⁰ but in any such case there was just one thing to do. Aristotle thought that meekness was a sort of sin of omission, "because the meek man was not apt to revenge himself."¹¹ This heathen standard is the standard maintained among the nations to-day and it is the standard of the great majority of men. They are not ready to suffer any wrong. They are not disposed to endure any injustice. It would be unworthy of their dignity not to demand instant reparation. It would be a proof of meanness rather than of manliness to be meek and silent rather than up in arms. Their self-respect would not allow them to turn the other cheek. That would be cowardly, and they prefer to be courageous and to prove their courage with their fists.

William James has declared that our permanent enemy is the rooted bellicosity of human nature, and he adds that man, biologically considered, and whatever else he may be into the bargain, is the most formidable of all beasts of prey, and, indeed, the only one that preys systematically on his own species.

¹⁰Cicero, *De Offic.*, lib. I, cap. 7. *Ut ne cui quis noceat nisi lacessitus injuria.*

¹¹Aristotle, *Ethic. ad Nicomach.* lib. iv, cap. 11, οὐ γὰρ τιμωρετικὸς ὁ πρᾶος.

Jesus believed that human nature could be revolutionized. He believed that men could be born again and be born from above. He believed that our brute inheritance could be subjugated to the purposes of the spirit. Therefore, Jesus said, "Blessed are the meek," but the world never has believed it. The heathen world despised meekness and the modern world never has practiced it. The heathen world and the modern world are at one in their repudiation of it as a guiding principle of life. If they are right, Jesus was wrong.

Which is right? Which is true, Blessed are the militarists or Blessed are the meek? The militarists had their way for five years in the Great War and wasted men and money without stint. What kind of an earth have they inherited? After a world war the whole world bankrupt and crippled, filled with famine and pestilence and myriads of graves. It may take a hundred years for the earth to recover its balance, to make good its loss, to regain its inheritance, to be what it once was. It may never get back again to some of the levels of prosperity and culture it once enjoyed.

What if the meek had had their way for five days or five weeks there in the beginning?

There are those in highest authority who declare that a few days for conference and deliberation might have saved the world disaster. In any case we feel that the application of the principles of Jesus could not by any possibility have resulted in such universal distress as was caused by the Great War. The proud were too proud not to fight, and they took up the sword and perished by the sword. The cruel and fierce aggressor was ground into the dust. The oppressed who protected themselves were penalized to very nearly the same extent. We do not need to determine who was aggressor and who was aggrieved. Anybody can see that all have suffered alike.

Mark Twain said that the English were mentioned in only one passage in the Bible and that was the passage which said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." That was intended for a joke, and it is a joke of the first quality. George Gissing said, "We English are essentially an Old Testament people. . . . We see ourselves as the chosen, and by no effort of spiritual aspiration can we attain unto humility." In Melbourne, Australia, we heard an address by the President of the Protestant Federation in which he said: "Our empire was built of God. I sometimes think that the pages setting forth

its glorious history might be bound up with the pages of this Holy Book setting forth God's dealings with the chosen people of old. It is an equally marvelous record of deliverance in the day of evil and progress along the ways of light and truth!"

With almost equal complacence one of the most recent English writers on the beatitudes claims meekness as one of the characteristics of the British imperialism, and he says: "It may be claimed that meekness in this sense of the word has proved the secret of such success as we have had as an imperial power. . . . Where we have known how to give way, as in South Africa, we have built up our empire; where we have been unyielding, as in the war with our American colonies in the eighteenth century, and in so much of our dealings with Ireland in this, we have failed disastrously." The meekness in South Africa was not any more apparent during the war in South Africa than it was during the war with the colonies: and after the war it consisted chiefly in restoring a portion of the wrested rights. It was as far removed from the meekness of the Sermon on the Mount as British imperialism is removed from Christian democracy.

R. H. Charles, Canon of Westminster,

quotes Mark Twain's saying, and then in all seriousness asserts that he "expressed a great truth"! and then proves it by adding, "It is just because that Great Britain has . . . been obedient more than any other nation in the present or the past to the higher light vouchsafed it by God alike in its internal and international relations, and has more than any other people striven to be faithful to its covenants, to be just to the weak, a stronghold to the needy in their distress, a champion of the oppressed, that in its case the promise of this beatitude—the meek shall inherit the earth—has in some measure been fulfilled and justified." Shades of Pecksniff and Micawber and all the other Island Pharisees! Mark Twain could not have conceived anything more delicious than that.

A young Hindu was studying these beatitudes and when he came to the words, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth," he said to his English teacher, "Sir, the Englishman may inherit the earth, but if you call him meek, he would be insulted." He spoke the truth, for the average Englishman has no desire either to be called meek or to be meek in his daily conduct and life. Americans are only Englishmen in the second and improved edition, and the English-

men consider themselves a reserved and modest race as compared with the boastful and blatant, arrogant and pushing Americans. Possibly both Englishmen and Americans are as meek as any other Occidental race; and if so, that means that all the races of Europe and America have an overweening pride in themselves and their achievements which leads to a selfish and aggressive nationalism and a chauvinistic patriotism, which in turn furnish the tinder for a world conflagration when conflicting interests become involved.

3. *Gentle.* There will be no hope of an international brotherhood and of world peace until there is more of meekness among men, more humility of spirit on all hands, and more readiness to endure injuries without instant recourse to retaliation. The meek are, first, humble; and, second, ready to endure without retaliation; and, third, gentle in demeanor, unruffled by provocation, firm for the right but self-controlled and tranquil even in the most trying conditions. Meekness will keep down the inordinate impulses to impatience and resentment and revenge and will retain its equanimity and be gentle in manner and voice, while it is strong and brave in doing its duty, without irritation, as in the sight of God. The meek may not be of a

naturally placid disposition, but they will have an acquired self-possession. If they have not natural meekness, they will have the meekness of grace.

III. MEEKNESS TRIUMPHANT. 1. *In Jesus.* Paul appealed to the Corinthians "by the meekness and the gentleness of Christ."¹² It was the forgiving and self-abnegating spirit of Jesus which impressed Paul most. He was so different from other men in this respect, and so different from the expected military Messias.

Jesus was meek and lowly in heart. The current conceptions of the Messiah called him to take the sword and to conquer the nations in the name of Israel's God. He refused to meet that expectation. He never employed any weapons of iron. He never sanctioned the use of force either in precept or example. He never compelled anybody into the Kingdom. He never showed the slightest desire for vengeance upon those who mistreated him. He never returned blow for blow. He preached meekness and lowliness all his life long, and never more powerfully than when he was lifted into the pulpit of the cross and there prayed that his enemies might be forgiven.

¹² Cor. 10. 1.

He knew that a kingdom of peace and righteousness never could be established by force. He knew that men never could be compelled to be right. He knew that war never would end war. He knew that oppression and injustice never could usher in the triumph of good will among men. He knew that like produced like, and that the use of bad means would lead only to bad ends. He had the ultimate wisdom of the Blessed Son.

He preached with ultimate authority and not as the scribes. They would have been ready to bless any uprising against the oppressor and any war for the protection of their wives and their homes. They would have called it "a defensive warfare" and have declared it "a holy cause." They would have sacrificed everything in such "a holy war" and have seen their Temple destroyed and their city laid waste and their people scattered to the ends of the earth. Jesus, with his pierced hands and his serenity of soul, gentle in manner and meek in spirit to the last, has founded an enduring temple, has laid the foundations of the City of God, has gathered together a people from all the ends of the earth. Not by might nor by power, not by physical might nor by material power, but by his spirit of meekness and love will he draw all men unto

him at last and all the kingdoms of this earth will become his kingdoms in blessed inheritance.

2. *In history.* Tholuck declares that in this promise Jesus pronounces meekness to be the truly world-conquering principle, with reference to its ultimate victory in the history of the future. History has seen the gradual progress of this principle. Slowly but surely the world is learning the truth that the divine ideal is the best, and men of meekness will come into places of influence and power and at last the people of God will be in supremacy around the globe. The gradual growth of ethical standards and the diminishing power of brute passions witness to an inherent tendency in the constitution of things. The purpose of Providence is the production of the highest type of civilized man, and that type is not to be found in the militant Judas of Galilee but in the pacifist Jesus of Nazareth.

The meek shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel; for the terrible one will be brought to naught with all his defensive and offensive armaments and apparatus, and the scornful shall be consumed in the ironies of his foolish endeavor and finally

futile effort to conquer by brute force and physical strength, and all that watch for iniquity will be cut off,¹³ but the meek will be guide in judgment, and the meek will be taught his way.¹⁴ His gentleness will make them great;¹⁵ and they will be blessed, for they will inherit the earth.

A little oil upon the hinge and the door will quit creaking. A little sunshine and the mantle of exclusiveness and suspicion will come off, while it is wrapped all the more closely in the time of storm. Where violence tyrannizes over men, the milk of human kindness dries up, and the cup of the nation's drink is filled with brothers' blood instead. If Ishmael's hand is against every man, then every man's hand is against him. They that take the sword shall perish by the sword. It is the lesson of all history that violence begets violence and vengeance begets vengeance, and there is no end to the bloody succession as long as any are left to hate and to kill.

There is a better way, the way of meekness and love. It would disband the armies and release the soldiers from their work of slaughter and destruction and turn them to produc-

¹³Isa. 29. 19, 20.

¹⁴Psa. 25. 9.

¹⁵Psa. 18. 35.

tive industry in the pursuits of peace. It would sink the navies in the deepest seas. It would burn all military equipments in the hottest flames. The hands with which men were used to maul and bruise each other would be put to useful employment or would be folded in prayer for mutual blessing and strength. Folded hands are not fighting hands. Praying hearts are not filled with murder and hate. The psalmist said, "The meek shall inherit the land, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace."¹⁶ Selfish aggressiveness brings disturbance and war; humility and meekness are the assurances of peace.

3. *In Love.* Meekness suffers long, and is kind, is patient under oppression and not anxious to repay evil with evil. Meekness envies not, vaunts not itself, is not puffed up, is not continually seeking for personal pre-eminence and envious of those who sit in any higher seats. Meekness does not behave itself unseemly and seeks not its own, is not continually insisting upon its rights at any cost to the peace of the family or the community or the world. Meekness is not provoked to the loss of its self-control. It thinks no evil, is not the prey of jealous suspicions. It re-

¹⁶Psa. 37. 11.

joices not in iniquity but only in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. It never fails. It is sure of victory. It will inherit the earth in time. It was the promise of the Master, and he, as Livingstone said, is a gentleman whose word can be relied upon.

4. *In the Christian.* Do we believe it? More than one person has read these beatitudes through and then has said, "If all of this talk about the poor in spirit and the meek is true, I am no Christian." The man who trusts in material might rather than in meekness is no disciple of Jesus. The nation which carries around a big stick and flourishes it on every possible occasion is not a Christian nation. He who would know the blessed life presented in this Sermon on the Mount must be poor in spirit and meek in manner and heart. If he revolts against this regimen, if he refuses to humble himself to this condition, he must stay outside the kingdom of heaven, and in the long run he will not even inherit the earth.

Time will prove that he is weaker than the man with more or equal or less stamina and strength of character who is at the same time self-controlled, who may have more or equal or less mental or physical power but who re-

fuses to use his power for purely selfish ends and with ruthless disregard of the common good or the brother's need, who is too magnanimous to take any advantage of another's failure or fault, too poor in spirit to be arrogant or assuming, too meek to be vengeful or resentful, but ruler of his own self and always loyal to the will of God. The man who is humble, unvengeful, gentle, self-restrained, meek and lowly like the Lord will be a man of widest influence among his fellows, trusted, respected, loved by all. He will inherit the earth. Even his enemies will admire him and the moral victory and the ultimate victory will be his.

5. *In Abraham.* Abraham was one of the strong characters of the Old Testament history, but he was a meek man who preferred peace to strife. When his own herdsmen and the herdsmen of Lot could not get along together without constant quarreling, Abraham told Lot that he might have his choice of any part of Canaan in which he preferred to dwell, and when Lot chose the well-watered and fertile plain of Jordan, which was as the garden of the Lord, Abraham took the poorer portion without murmuring; and then we read that God said to Abraham, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where

thou art northward and southward and eastward and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever . . . Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee."¹⁷ What Abraham gave up in meekness God gave back to him in reward for his meekness as his inheritance.

Abraham was a man of faith and he received this inheritance in faith. As a matter of fact, all he ever possessed of it was a grave. The psalmist may have had this promise to Abraham in mind when he said, "Those who are meek like Abraham will inherit the earth." Jesus may have appropriated that promise, thinking that the meek, like Abraham, would inherit the earth by faith in the beginning as well as in fact at the end.

The meek have not inherited the earth as yet. Jesus did not say they would have immediate possession. They may have to yield to brute force again and again, but the triumph of the bloodthirsty battalions always is temporary and gentleness gains the victory at last. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the holy land of the ideal, the holy land of the future. They alone shall succeed

¹⁷Gen. 13. 14, 15, 17.

in bringing the kingdom of heaven to this earth and in building the City of God among men.

6. *In Psalm 37.* It was the promise of the Old Testament and the promise is repeated by Jesus, "Trust in the Lord, and do good, and dwell in the land, and thou shalt be fed"¹⁸ with its riches. Abandon yourself to God's protection and God's providence will see to it that God's promise is fulfilled. "Evildoers shall be cut off, but they that wait upon the Lord shall inherit the earth. Yet a little while and the wicked shall not be, and thou shalt seek his place, and shall not find it. But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace."¹⁹ "Such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth, and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off."²⁰ "The seed of the wicked shall be cut off. The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell therein forever."²¹ "Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land; when the wicked are cut off thou shalt see it."²²

7. *In Nature.* These promises have strengthened the hearts of God's people in the

¹⁸Psa. 37. 3.

²¹Psa. 37. 28, 29.

¹⁹Psa. 37. 9, 10, 11.

²²Psa. 37. 34.

²⁰Psa. 37. 22.

past and have maintained their courage to the present day. They have seen the mighty militarisms of the ancient and the modern worlds go their swift way to destruction while the people of God have survived. They have seen the mammoths and the dinosaurs, the megatheria and the mastodons disappear from the face of the earth, while the conies and the microbes have multiplied to this day. They have seen the savage brutes inheriting not the earth but a cage in the Zoological Garden. They see the lions and the tigers and the wolves gradually being exterminated before the onward march of civilization, while the sheep and the cows are increasing in number all the time. The eagles and the vultures are becoming rare museum specimens, while the turkeys and the chickens and the ducks gobble and cackle and quack in safety and at ease.

It is the lesson of all nature and all history. The savage monsters of antiquity are preserved only in fossil remains, and the savage and brutal nations of the ancient world are extinct to-day. The great carnivora and reptiles which still survive are doomed to disappear, while the tamer animals will live on in domestic usefulness and peace. The cannibal tribes to whom all neighbors were enemies and to whom their proximity meant

unceasing warfare were doomed to extermination and some of them have been saved only by their conversion to the gospel of brotherhood and peace. It will be so unto the end of time.

The nations relying upon military preparedness will tax themselves into bankruptcy or fight themselves into physical and moral decrepitude until they learn by sad experience that Jesus spoke the truth when he said that the meek shall inherit the earth. The possession of the earth in peace will become possible only as the primitive brute instincts are restrained or replaced by spiritual ideals.

There is blood in the eye of a bull as soon as he comes within sight of his foe. A bantam is ready to fight at the first opportunity. A bull-dog shows his teeth as soon as his rival appears. There are men who reproduce these types. They go around carrying a Big Stick and showing their teeth. They lust for battle, just like the brutes. They have not gotten beyond the bantam's pride in his prowess and constant desire for conflict. They believe in the rule of might rather than right: and therefore they are doomed to disappear.

There was a time when every individual felt that he had to fight a duel to maintain his honor, no matter how slight the provocation

might be. We think to-day that that social standard was a folly and a delusion, and duelling has been driven out of modern life by the verdict of common sense upon its futility. The day may come when nations will realize that their honor can be maintained without instant flashing of the sword and resort to mutual slaughter. It will be an advance in civilization. It will mark another step in approach toward the ideals of Jesus.

It is possible that then the symbols of the various nations may be changed and men no longer will be proud of proclaiming their loyalty to the British lion or the American eagle or the Gaelic cock or the Russian bear or the Chinese dragon, but breaking away from brute rapacity may find their ideals in better things.

8. *In Social Relations.* Ruthless capitalism is in control to-day but its fate is sealed. It cannot long survive before the rising tide of conscience in social affairs which sees clearly that the future is in the hands of those who value man more than money and believe in service more than in selfishness.

The downtrodden poor will be in possession of the earth when the money barons of to-day will be as much of an anachronism as the mail-clad mediæval barons are now. The bru-

talities and barbarisms of war will be outlawed by the common sense of the common people and in their stead there will be arbitration conferences and international courts of peace. The disciples of Jesus will throw all their influence on the side of conciliation and kindness and in the avoidance of the devastations of war they will have time for the cultivation of commerce and civilization and culture until in their meekness they have conquered and inherited the earth.

Charles George Gordon died at Khartoum, and the British government erected a memorial to his abiding in Saint Paul's Cathedral in London, and on his tomb this inscription was placed: "A man who at all times and everywhere gave his strength to the weak, his sympathy to the suffering, his substance to the poor, and his heart to God." General Gordon was one of the heroes of English history. He was one of the strongest men of that strong race; but he was a disciple of Jesus, and his gentleness and meekness made him great.

John Bunyan knew the blessedness of the meek. He wrote, "Now, as they were going along and talking, they espied a boy feeding his father's sheep. The boy was in very mean clothes, but of a fresh and well-favored coun-

tenance, and as he sat by himself he sang. 'Hark,' said Mr. Greatheart, 'to what the shepherd boy saith.' So they harkened, and he said:

"He that is down need fear no fall;
He that is low no pride;
He that is humble ever shall
Have God to be his Guide.

"I am content with what I have,
Little be it or much;
And, Lord, contentment still I crave
Because thou savest such.

"Fullness to such a burden is
That go on pilgrimage;
Here little, and hereafter bliss,
Is best from age to age.

Then said their guide, 'Do you hear him? I will dare to say this boy lives a merrier life and wears more of that herb called heart's-ease in his bosom than he that is clad in silk and velvet.' "

It may have been true. That shepherd lad may not have owned a foot of land anywhere, and yet he may have enjoyed the fields and the hills and the woods and the flowers a thousand times more than their owners did. They may have had legal right to them, while he had actual possession of them. They may have been deaf and blind to their wonders

and beauties, while he knew all about them and enjoyed them to the full. Those who have his meekness can enjoy even the riches and treasures of others, and they inherit the earth not by the laws of legal inheritance, which give property right and nothing more, but by the right of the Creator of all things who made the earth and all that in it is not to be the exclusive property of any one, but the common inheritance of all his children who have the capacity for enjoying them and who in their delight in them have such use of them as mere legal owners never know.

IV. CONCLUSION. Jesus the son of Sirach said, "Do (*διεξάγαγε*, thoroughly carry out) thy works in meekness, and thou shalt be beloved above the glory of men."²³ Let meekness be in the beginning and the middle and the end of all your works, and the love and respect which they will win for you will be more glorious than anything else among men. Let your works be good in themselves, and let them be done well throughout, and let meekness clothe them with graciousness and beauty, and they will have the blessing of the Lord resting upon them and they will bring you both the glory and the love of men. Jesus the Son of Mary said, "So let your light

²³ Ecclus. 3. 19.

shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify [not you, but] your Father who is in heaven"; for "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."²⁴

Let us believe him. Let us put the matter to the test as individuals, as communities, as nations, and the Father in heaven will be glorified and the riches of the earth will be inherited and all men will dwell in mutual honor and love as they never have so far in the history of the race, and the race will come to its perfection in the kingdom of heaven realized on earth. Blessedness will be found in meekness and humility of spirit and the mourners will be comforted in every land. Jesus said it was true. It was easier for the Orientals who heard him say it on that day of the Great Sermon to accept it and believe it than it is for the Occidental of to-day; but unless the Occident accepts and realizes this gospel the future of the world lies in the hands of the Orient from which this gospel first came and where it may yet find its most perfect and complete fulfillment. It is the gospel of highest wisdom. It is the gospel of final victory. It is the gospel of the Prince of Peace.

²⁴Matt. 5. 16, 5.

CHAPTER IV

THE FOURTH BEATITUDE

I. RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PEACE. Jesus went on to say, "*Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*" Here in the beatitudes it is as the psalmist once said, "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."¹ It is the Prince of Peace who is speaking here, and of him Zacharias had sung, that he would "guide our feet into the way of peace."² He does it by guiding our feet into the way of righteousness and, as the evangelical prophet had said, "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and confidence forever."³

Peace and righteousness go together. It was James, the brother of Jesus, who wrote, "The fruit of righteousness, with peace, is sown by them that cultivate peace."⁴ The fruit of unrighteousness is sown in war by those who cultivate the brutalities and the dishonesties and the unavoidable immorali-

¹Psa. 85. 10.²Isa. 32. 17.³Luke 1. 79.⁴Jas. 3. 18.

ties of war. Jesus is the Prince of Peace, and Jeremiah prophesied of him, "This is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."⁵ Then the Prince of Peace is the Lord our Righteousness, and we are to hunger and thirst to be like him and our hunger and thirst will be satisfied in him.

Primarily, this is the beatitude for the individual man. It is possible for a man to hunger and thirst after righteousness independently of everybody else. Robinson Crusoe alone on his island could have met this condition as fully as the man in the crowded city streets. Primarily, this is a beatitude not for what we are but for what we desire to be. Jesus did not say, "Blessed are the righteous," though that would be just as true. He said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness," and that is more comforting, because it is possible for us to hunger and thirst after righteousness whether we are righteous or not; but not for long, for the promise is, "They shall be filled." Christ is pledged to satisfy our hunger and thirst and there is no possibility of failure on his side. The only possibility of failure is in the failure of our hunger and thirst.

⁵Jer. 23. 6.

Do we really desire to be righteous? Do we seriously purpose to be good? The beatitudes tell us what righteousness is. The Sermon on the Mount sets it forth in detail. Do we long for its realization in our life? Then we can be filled with righteousness ourselves, and when there are a sufficient number of us associated together in the effort, we can establish righteousness and peace upon the earth. What began as a solitary virtue with us may become a universal attainment in time. The individual's hunger and thirst after righteousness may be satisfied to the full here and now. It may be independent of all external circumstances for its inception and its continuance and its complete satisfaction; but in human society it will not be satisfied until righteousness prevails among all men. We have not seen the fulfillment of that desire as yet. We never will see it until all the worldly-minded are converted to the mind of Jesus and, poor in spirit and meek, they help the peaceful advancement and establishment of Christian principles in all human relationships.

II. HUNGER. Hunger is a very real thing. There is nothing vague or indefinite about it. It is a craving, a gnawing, a very intense pain at the last. The figure Jesus used suggests

that our desire for righteousness must not be fleeting or fanciful. There must be earnestness and intensity in it, a craving and an aching which will not cease until it is filled.

When the people of God hungered in the wilderness God gave them manna to eat, and in some respects that manna might symbolize the spiritual bread, the spiritual fullness and satisfaction which God gives to those who hunger after righteousness. The manna had to be gathered every day. As the hunger revived the supply was renewed. The manna could not be stored up against future need. Yesterday's supply would not serve for to-day. To-day's supply would not suffice for to-morrow. Sufficient to each day was the filling thereof, and no more. It is evident that the analogy holds in the spiritual life. Spiritual hunger must be continuous if the spiritual supply is not to fail. Deprivation and starvation will be the sure fate of the one who depends either upon past providence or future grace.

The manna had to be gathered by each one for himself. One could not gather for many. Nobody could hire anyone else to gather for him. It was a personal matter. Each gathered his own supply. So spiritual hunger is a personal experience. Neither father nor

mother nor friend can have the hunger for anyone else, and they cannot transfer their own filling and satisfaction to the one they most love. The starving soul is satisfied. The indolent or indifferent soul who depends upon others to gather what spiritual supplies he needs never will know what spiritual satisfaction means.

Jesus stood in the synagogue at Capernaum and said, "I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead. This is the bread that cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world . . . This is that bread that came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever."⁶ It was a hard saying, and the Jews in the synagogue could not understand such seemingly cannibalistic symbolism, and it has remained a hard saying to many people from that day to this; but there are those who understand.

They are not content with little things in

⁶John 6. 48-51, 58.

the spiritual life. They long to be more and more fully cleansed from sin. They yearn to be more and more fully devoted to God's service. Above all other things they desire to be united with their Lord in mind, in spirit, and in work. They hear Jesus say, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger,"⁷ and they come to him and find all their spiritual hunger satisfied.

III. THIRST. The pangs of hunger are poignant enough; but they say that the tortures of unsatisfied thirst are worse. Every living being has had the experience of thirst. Some never have known what it was to be beyond the reach of means for its immediate satisfaction. Others in mid-desert or mid-ocean have come to know that unsatisfied thirst was the awful acme of anguish possible to man. In these particulars our natural thirst is a good symbol of the thirst of man's soul after God. This thirst is universal and when unsatisfied it leads to continuous misery.

The psalmist's cry, "As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?"⁸ is the conscious or un-

⁷John 6. 35.

⁸Psa. 42. 1, 2.

conscious cry of every human soul. Some thousands of years have rolled away since those words were spoken, and he from whose lips they fell was a strange, bronzed man in a land far away from our own and in circumstances far different from those of to-day; and yet his words seem to express the innermost longings of all human hearts in all the centuries.

They say that it is an altogether peculiar cry, heart-harrowing, soul-penetrating, which the thirsty stag utters in the dry season when it wails for the waterbrooks. The forest people and the dwellers in the woods say that it makes them shudder, it is so full of pathos and distress. The psalmist had heard that cry and it had moved his heart. There is no sound like it in the animal world. He prays to God, "As the hart crieth after the waterbrooks, so my soul crieth after thee, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God." He alone is life and has life and can give life. He is the Bread of life and the Water of life. Without him we perish with hunger. Without him our souls will thirst as in a spiritual desert where there is no green nor living thing.

This longing for God is characteristic of the race. It was Augustine who said, "O

God, thou hast formed us for thyself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee." That has been true from the beginning of world history until now. It was true of those venerable nomad chiefs who four thousand years ago sat under the palms of Mamre and then were laid to rest in the cave of Machpelah, and true of those fishermen who in the days of the Emperor Augustus spread their nets on the shore of the sea of Gennesaret.

It has been true of all the most noble and thoughtful souls of all the nations and all the times, of Confucius and Solon and Numa, of Buddha and Plato and Paul, of Melchizedek and Marcus Aurelius, of Socrates and Job, true of people with white and black and brown and yellow faces, true of those in philosophers' mantles and peasants' coarse robes, of warriors who carried shields and spears, of shepherds who followed the flock, of bronzed sailors who roamed the high seas, of hardy mountaineers whose home was in the high Sierras, of the men in turbans sitting on their dromedaries in mid-Sahara and of the men in bearskin and sealskin robes in the Icelandic fields of snow. It has been true of the king on the throne and of the poor man behind the plow. They all have been spirit-

ually poor and needy. They have sought for that which would slake their spiritual thirst. They have wandered up and down through the world and have not found among the things of time and sense the satisfaction for which they longed, and they have cried, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God."

There are moments in every life when the soul reaches the altitude on which the psalmist stood. To some they come very rarely, to others more often; and the spirit's nobility within us is manifest by the frequency of this visitation of yearning, longing, thirsting, panting after lasting satisfaction in spiritual things. The nobler souls like the psalmist and like Augustine are continually conscious of this spiritual craving, as they also are conscious of its complete satisfaction in their Lord. Other men are so absorbed in other things that they very rarely indeed come to the recognition of this smothered but deep-lying and essential thirst for the Divine.

Yet where is the man so wholly given up to the pursuit of worldly pleasures or goods who in the very heat of the chase does not some time see like a flash that the result attained is not worth his effort, does not hear like a thunder-clap or, even louder than that, like the still small voice of God, the whispered

cry within him, "All these things will not satisfy your inmost soul"? Where is the man who has drunk most deeply of this world's intoxications and vanities who has not found at some time that there were dregs in the cup, and has not said to his own soul, "These things are for a season only; I thirst for satisfaction eternally"? Where is the man who has gone farthest and deepest into dissipation and sin who has not in some rational moment come to himself, and known beyond all possibility of doubt that his very soul thirsted for God?

In such moment of gracious visitation the soul may turn to many fountains for the satisfaction it needs, and in some of these satisfaction may be found for a time, the thirst may be allayed for a moment, the longing may be forgotten for an interval; but if the soul has seen at last that it is made for God and will be restless till it find rest in him, that it thirsts after God and nothing else and nothing less will satisfy, it must come to this young man Jesus standing here on the mountain slope and hear him say, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." It must come to him as he sits on the brink of Jacob's Well and listen to his gracious promise there,

“Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water which I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life,”⁹ and it must say to him as that woman of Samaria said, “Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not forevermore.”¹⁰ It must come to him as he stands in the synagogue of Capernaum and hear him say, “I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”¹¹ Any lasting satisfaction must be found in him.

What Jesus said of Jacob’s Well is true of all the other wells of this world. Neither spiritual nor natural thirst can be satisfied fully and finally at any of these. They may slake the thirst for a season, but it soon returns again; and the thirsty soul will drink and drink and not be satisfied.

There is the honking of many horns and the marshaled movement of many automobiles on the street, and all the great hall is brilliant with lights. There is the flash of jewels and the flash of wit in animated conversation.

⁹John 4. 13, 14.

¹⁰John 4. 15.

¹¹John 6. 35.

The heart beats high with excitement and the cheek flushes with pleasure. There are sweet strains of music and the rhythmical motion of many feet. There is jest and jollity, much merriment and great hilarity. The lights and the music and the fascinations of beauty and the motion of the dance are all intoxicating and exhilarating; and the moments seem winged as they hasten headlong through the night. Here is happiness; and the young and the old drink deep of this fountain of pleasure. Is this happiness, or is it mere exhilaration? This is happiness, for three hours or more.

Here is a man who has come home from the ball, and when he is alone in his room he says to himself: "It was a very successful affair. I do not remember ever to have enjoyed myself more at such a place. It has cost me considerable money, and I am likely to have a headache all day to-morrow, and I do not remember hearing a single word spoken which was worth treasuring or was in any sense profitable; but it was pure pleasure. When I have had two or three days to right up from this dissipation I am ready to do it over again; but it is too late now for me to say my prayers before going to bed. I hardly feel in the mood for saying them, anyway."

Here is a young girl who has come home

from this brilliant affair which has been her social *début*. Alone in her room she says to herself, "I never was as happy as this in my life; I doubt if I will ever have a better time in heaven. To be sure, there were a few people there whom I would be surprised to meet in heaven, for I have heard some very unsavory things said about them; but they were the pink of propriety to-night, and I rather enjoyed meeting them and talking for once in my life with somebody of that sort; and I do hope that in heaven I never shall be quite so thoroughly tired out as I am now, and my head will not be quite so hot when I lay it on my pillow; and now—'If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take.' No, I cannot pray that prayer with any honesty to-night. I am just beginning to have a good time in life. I am not satisfied with this beginning. I want to go again and again and again."

That is a reasonably fair presentation of the best side of the highest type of innocent but purely worldly pleasure. It may be considered as harmless in its character, and it may be happiness as long as it lasts; but the indulgence in it must be repeated again and again and again, for it never fully and finally satisfies. Whosoever drinketh of the water of

this fountain will thirst again. Even more clearly is that true of those who plunge into excesses of indulgence and sin.

In the old days of the dominance of the saloon in every community and in national politics I met a stranger on the street. He was well dressed, neat in his apparel, and rather fastidious in his appearance. He had intellectually and nervously strong features and a head crowned with a mass of iron-gray hair; but his brilliant eye was unsteady and his tongue was thick so that he fumbled his speech, although his brain seemed to be clear and he walked straight enough. He stopped me and seemed disposed toward conversation. It was a pitiable tale he told. He said: "I am drunk, drunk again. I *will* spend my money for the drink, although in these hard times I ought not to let a cent go that way. But *I will drink*, and I never get enough of it." Then he ended with half-humorous, half-serious apology. "But I am one of the best fellows about town."

I did not know him, but I thought that might be true. Like so many others, he probably was sociable by nature and always ready for a good time. He liked brilliant conversation and jolly companionship, and he found what he liked in the saloon. He drank for

sociability's sake, and the liquor made him more brilliant and sociable. The home circle seemed tame in comparison with the attraction offered by the boys and their fun. Night after night he was with them, and he liked the drink and the fun more and more. The more he drank, the more he liked the drink. His appetite grew by what it fed upon.

At last there came a time when he said to himself: "I am liable to go too far in this direction. I must begin to put on the brakes." He honestly and earnestly tried to do it; but the thirst was upon him, an unnatural thirst he had slowly but surely begotten within him until it had attained to what seemed to be supernatural strength. When he would drink less he always drank more. When he would quit drinking he only made ready for a prolonged debauch. He went away from old associations, but he never got away from the infatuation for the drink. He reasoned with himself, but reasoning could not save him. He saw his fortune slipping through his fingers and he tried to grasp it that a remnant might be saved; but his grasp was nerveless now, and he needed the stimulant of strong drink. He said, "I will drink no more," but he could not say, "I will thirst no more"; and his thirst was stronger than he.

It had seemed to him in the beginning that this fountain of pleasure set up in the saloon would be sufficient to satisfy. All the day long he had looked forward to the time when he could get away from the office and get into the jolly crowd again and be one of the best fellows in the town. Every night he drank with the rest, and with every succeeding night he was athirst again; but every night he felt satisfied and every day he knew that when night would come he would have a good time.

That was in the beginning, but after a time he went to the saloon, not for pleasure but from necessity. He prayed for strength to stay away, and then went in again. He dreaded the sight of the saloon door. He dragged himself through it. He was glad to get out once more. His only reason for going was that he had an uncontrollable thirst which he must drink to satisfy. His only reason for going again was that the thirst returned more fiercely upon him, and he had to drink to quiet it. He drank and drank, although he knew that whosoever drank of that fountain would thirst again, and that the thirst would be always deeper, stronger, more demonic in its hold and power.

He had been one of the best fellows about the town. It may be that he was still; but

the demon of thirst for strong drink had mastered him and he knew it now. He knew that that demon of thirst would take from him all his money and all his friends, his social standing and his self-respect. He knew that that demon would clothe him in rags and lead him over the hill to the poorhouse, or would clothe him in disgrace and despair and lead him down hill to the river's brink and to a suicide's grave in its depths. He knew that that demon of thirst would stay with him forever and would burn within his breast until he would cry across the great gulf, "One drop of water to cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame."

That is a reasonably fair presentation of the worst side of one of the lowest types of sensual indulgence in worldly pleasure. Between the highest type and the lowest type there is a millionfold variety; but over every fountain of worldly pleasure Jesus has written those words spoken at Jacob's Well, "No satisfaction for natural thirst or spiritual thirst is to be found here; for whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again."

It is true for all ranks of society, from the gay butterfly of fashion who belongs to the Four Hundred and has all that wealth and youth and beauty can give her to the unfor-

tunate who walks the streets in search of sin until her feet begin to blister because her path has led her at last out upon the burning pave that lies before the gate of hell. The soul of each is unsatisfied. Let each of them drink as deeply as they choose of the fountains they have preferred, they will thirst again and they will thirst forever. It is true for all men without Christ, rich or poor, famous or obscure, educated or ignorant, they may drink as they please of the fountains of pleasure and of wealth, of power and of fame, of earthly friendships and loves, of science and art, of the lowest lusts of the flesh and of the highest and purest enjoyments of soul which man can find or furnish for himself, and all these fountains will fail to satisfy. The soul will thirst again; and unless it find some other fountain from some higher source its thirst will be unsatisfied through all eternity.

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The race is like a caravan in some desert wilderness. The caravan is innumerable. The distance across the desert seems immeasurable; but all must trudge on and on. Every throat is athirst, and there is nothing in all the desert waste able fully and finally to satisfy. There are oases at which many linger long, but from which they must at last tear

themselves away and hasten on across the arid wastes of sand. Some carry flasks filled with intoxicants which seem to satisfy the thirst for a moment but in reality only stimulate its awful flames. There is good company and jolly companionship in this caravan, but not one friend is able to do anything to slake the thirst of his friend. Some read books, but long after a higher truth than the libraries of this world can furnish them. Some make merry, mad music, but cannot drown with it the discord which sounds in their own souls. Many have joys of many kinds, but all are longing for joys of a higher type. From day to day they travel on; but in the most happy and sunny days a divine discontent walks like their own shadow at their side.

They are like the Israelites in the wilderness of Zin. We read that there was no water for the congregation. "With throats unslaked, with black lips baked," with parched tongues and bloodshot eyes, with burning thirst, in urgent need, they came to Moses and Aaron and said, "We must have water or we and our cattle must die." Then Moses and Aaron fell upon their faces at the tabernacle door, and the glory of the Lord appeared unto them; and Moses was commanded to smite

the rock before the eyes of all the people, and it would give forth water that all might drink.¹²

Paul in the First Epistle to the Corinthians says that that incident in the wilderness of Zin is but a symbol of the experience of the true Israel of God in all their wilderness wandering through life. He says that they all drink the same spiritual drink, and it is given in such unfailing supply that their thirst always is satisfied; for with them it is not as if they drank from some stationary rock from which they had to wander on again. Paul says that the true Israel of God drink of the spiritual Rock which follows them, and that Rock is Christ.¹³

It is one of the boldest of his figures of speech. He appropriates the doubtful tradition to illustrate the certainty in Christian experience. The whole race must wander through the wilderness of life. Every soul will thirst for God, the living God; and God will satisfy the thirst of those who trust in him. If need be, he will smite the solid rock until it pour from its heart an artesian flood! If need be, he will tear that rock from its age-long foundations and send it with its unfailing

¹²Num. 20. 1-13.

¹³I Cor. 10. 4.

supply to follow them! He will work any miracle necessary to make good his word. If need be, he will bankrupt heaven of its choicest treasure, and send to earth his Son! Then that Son will say, "Whosoever shall drink of the water which I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water which I shall give him shall be in him as a well of water springing up into everlasting life."¹⁴

Let the great caravan halt for a moment! The Lord would make a proclamation. Let all the people hear! He says: "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water."¹⁵ The first time that we ever camped in the mountains we remember that as one of the discoveries. We had supposed that there might be a scarcity of water in the altitudes; but it was not so. We passed over plains which were hot and dusty and dry; but when we got among the mountains there were rivers and streams and springs everywhere. We wandered through the wilderness to the

¹⁴John 4. 14.

¹⁵Isa. 41. 17, 18.

valley of Hetch-hetchy; and nestling there in the heart of the heights we found it as green as an emerald isle. The Tuolumne River ran through it; and in the winter season they told us that the whole valley was one pool of water.

In the Yosemite Valley the Merced, the River of Mercy, ran sparkling, snow-cold, and pure; and along every trail we climbed there were springs upon springs of the clearest and sweetest water which ever satisfied a pilgrim's thirst. Let all the people hear! It is the promise of the Holy One of Israel that all through the journey of life we may have just such an abundance of supply. He says: "I will open rivers on the bare mountains, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." He is able to do it. If we feel our need of him, he will send the River of Mercy, sparkling, pure, rippling to our very feet in any hour. In him there will be fountains of unfailing supply, rivers of salvation, oceans of peace, satisfaction for one, satisfaction for all, satisfaction forevermore.

In the midst of world history and in the midst of the nations stands this young man on the mountain slope and he says, "Blessed are

they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Later in the midst of the multitude, in the great assembly of the nation, he stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."¹⁶ Again at Jacob's Well he said, "Whosoever shall drink of the water which I shall give him shall never thirst."¹⁷ At the end of the Book in the visions of the new heaven and the new earth it is He who sits on the throne and issues his final proclamation to be the portion of his people through all eternity—"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him who is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."¹⁸ . . . Let him who heareth say, Come. Let him who is athirst come. Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."¹⁹

Who are these who are arrayed in white robes and stand before the throne? These are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat. For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead

¹⁶John 7. 37.

¹⁸Rev. 21. 6.

¹⁷John 4. 14.

¹⁹Rev. 22. 7.

them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.²⁰ They drink of the water he gives them and they never thirst.

The great tragedy of human existence is that so many men are indifferent to these facts. With spiritual satisfaction possible both now and for evermore they are not desiring it. They are not seeking it nor finding it. They are seeking for satisfaction, but somewhere else. There are multitudes who never go to church and never hear the gospel, who spend their Sundays in labor or in lounging or in carousing, who read the newspapers but never read the Bible, who fish or hunt or walk or ride or go to the theater and the movies but never are found in any religious meeting. They would feel strange and awkward there. They would be like fish out of water. They might be at home in a dance hall, but they would not be at home in the house of God. They never utter God's name except in blasphemy, and they never mention divine things except to sneer at them. They have no place for God in all their thoughts. They resolutely have set themselves to banish him and his from their lives. They may belong to comparatively respectable society.

²⁰Rev. 7. 14-17.

They may be moral and satisfied with their morality; but they are godless by choice and by their persistent refusal to think about Him.

There are multitudes among the working classes who day after day carry on their struggle for existence and spend all their energies in the gaining of their daily bread. Their necessities compel their closest attention, and many of them seem to forget that there are other and greater things of which they should be mindful, too. In all the lands the complaint arises that the working people are drifting away from all religious influences and from all interest in religious things. They are becoming Marxian materialists, and any longing they may have had for divine fellowship and help is being deadened by the philosophy prevalent in their labor unions and their political parties, as well as by the pressure of temporal necessities and the ever-present constraint of poverty's claims.

There are other multitudes among the rich who seem equally driven away from God by the claims of fashion and the pursuit of pleasure. Their life is a giddy round of amusements, and, butterfly-like, they bask in the sunshine and sip the honey from flower to flower; and they seem to have no more

realization or appreciation of earnest and religious things than could find lodgment in a butterfly's heart or a butterfly's brain. Like those Israelites of old, they dance and dance about the golden calf. There may be one man on the mountain top who is holding communion with God, but they have forgotten him and they prefer to dance attendance on this more visible and material Deity. They are not thirsting for righteousness, for purity, for God. They thirst only for present enjoyment and forgetfulness of all which may lie beyond.

There are other multitudes of the criminal and the depraved, whose thirst seems to be for wrongdoing and whose longing seems only for evil, who live for the satisfaction of passion alone, whose God is their belly, whose glory is their shame, murderers, adulterers, drunkards, the abandoned and the vicious classes, the slaves of passions and lusts, in voluntary and self-imposed servitude eating husks with the swine. It would seem hopeless to think of any permanent betterment of the race if all men were as we have described these various classes in every community to be; but all men are not so and these men are not always so.

The most thoughtless among them at some time or another is forced to stop and think.

The most careless among them at some time or another stands before a coffin lid or hears a snatch of Christian song and for a moment is sobered to wonder if it is all of life to live and all of death to die. The most abandoned among them at some time or another has his moments of remorse when strangely enough he finds in the depths of his heart, where it has been submerged under the flood of the sins of many years, a longing for better things, a thirsting for the best of all things, fellowship with his Father, communion with his God. It may be among the swine, or it may be at the banqueting table where the prodigal is wasting his substance with women and wine; but sooner or later, at some time or another, every soul will come to itself and in a lucid moment will say: "There is a Father's house where is plenty and to spare. I am surfeited with sin. How I wish I were there."

Consciously or unconsciously this longing after God, which is fundamentally a hungering and thirsting after righteousness, is cherished in every human soul, and sooner or later it will assert itself. With the psalmist it will cry, "My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is."²¹ God always hears such cries.

²¹Psa. 63. 1.

He gives in answer to them a satisfaction which never cloyes with the possession, which fills with a sweetness and richness infinite in its depths and in its unfailing supply, like God all good.

Blasphemers like John Bunyan have been saved. Infidels like John Newton have been converted. Drunkards like John B. Gough have been reclaimed. Murderers and adulterers like King David have repented and have been restored to the joy of God's salvation. There is hope for every one. The man who has drunk the cup of this world's pleasure and lust even to the bitter dregs, by the very intensity of his disappointment sometimes is led to lift his eyes toward heaven. The man who has accumulated fabulous sums, by his personal experience of the hollowness of this earth's riches sometimes is led to lay up treasures in the world beyond. The man who has plunged into headlong and seemingly hopeless crime, by the very enormity of his guilt sometimes is forced to cry unto God for forgiveness and salvation. We need not despair of anyone. Sometimes the very reason we see for despair may be a reason for hopefulness. It may lead to a hunger and thirst for righteousness which God in his mercy will satisfy.

CHAPTER V

THE FIFTH BEATITUDE

1. *Righteousness and Mercy.* It is of God's mercy that the hungry and the thirsting after righteousness are filled. Jesus said, "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled," and then he went on at once to say, "*Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*" The filling suggested the infinite and everlasting mercy of God, and the mercy of God suggested the blessedness of those who were merciful as God is merciful.

2. *The Mercy of God.* Was not the name of the Lord proclaimed unto Moses and through Moses to all the people, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin"?¹ Had not the psalmist said, "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. . . . He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according

¹Exod. 34. 6, 7.

to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. . . . Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. . . . The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them''?² The everlasting mercy of God leads to the filling with righteousness and the keeping of the covenant and the doing of the commandments in gratitude and love.

3. *Mercy; in the Bible.* God is merciful, and men are to be merciful as he. Had not the Old Testament made that clear? Had it not commanded that if anyone found his enemy's beast of burden gone astray, he should bring it back to him again? Or, if it had fallen under its burden, he should not leave it lying, but putting aside his own concerns for the moment he should help it to its feet again?³ Was it not made a law for God's people that every seventh year the land should lie fallow and whatever grew upon it should be for the poor to eat and whatever they left

²Psa. 103. 8, 10-11, 13, 17-18.

³Exod. 23. 4, 5.

should be for the wild things of the wood and the air?⁴ Were they not exhorted to leave some grapes on the vine and some olives on the tree and some grain in the field for the gleaning of the poor?⁵

If a poor man's garment was taken in pawn, must it not be returned to him before the sun went down, because his garment was his robe in which he slept?⁶ Were not the hungry to be fed and the sorrowful to be brought into one's own house? Were not the naked to be clothed, and the widows and the orphans to be consoled?⁷ Were the foreigners not to be oppressed because God's people themselves once had been foreigners and had known oppression in Egypt?⁸ Were they not to labor six days but rest on the seventh day, that the cattle and the man servant and the maid servant and the stranger within the gates might refresh themselves?⁹ Had not Micah said, "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God"?¹⁰ Had not the whole law been summed up in the commandment to love God with the whole heart and mind and soul

⁴Exod. 23. 11.

⁵Lev. 19. 9, 10.

⁶Exod. 22. 26, 27.

⁷Exod. 22. 22, 23.

⁸Exod. 22. 21.

⁹Exod. 23. 12.

¹⁰Mic. 6. 8.

and strength and one's neighbor as one's self?¹¹

Jesus had read these things in the Old Testament, and he had accepted the spirit of them as the law of his own life. The peasants and the priests and the scribes who listened to him on the mountain that day had read them too, but not all of them had made these things the law of their lives. That is evident from the manner in which Jesus emphasized the truth of them in his ministry. Luke says that he put the commandment into this sermon, "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful."¹² Had not the Old Testament said that with the merciful God would show himself merciful?¹³ Did not Jesus put that principle into his prayer, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,"¹⁴ and had he not taken time to comment upon this one petition as though it were most important that it should be understood, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses"?¹⁵

This teaching was enforced again in the ▷

¹¹Deut. 6. 5; Lev. 19. 18.

¹⁴Matt. 6. 12.

¹²Luke 6. 36.

¹⁵Matt. 6. 14, 15.

¹³Psa. 18. 35.

parable of the unmerciful servant whose own great debt had been forgiven but who refused to forgive the little debt owing to him and therefore was delivered to the tormentors. "So likewise," said Jesus, "shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."¹⁶ Then, in the great parable of the Judgment Day, Jesus declared that it was the merciful who would hear the Lord say, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, come ye beatified, inherit the kingdom."¹⁷ The parable of the good Samaritan taught the same truth.

Paul was repeating the teaching of the Old Testament and the teaching of Jesus when he wrote to the Christians of Asia Minor, "Be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ hath forgiven you. Be ye therefore imitators of God, as dear children."¹⁸ God is merciful. Men may imitate God in his mercy, and in so doing they will find their greatest blessedness.

4. *Mercy; in the Poets.* Shakespeare said, and again in the famous paragraph in the trial scene in the *Merchant of Venice*,

¹⁶Matt. 18. 35.

¹⁷Matt. 25. 34-40.

¹⁸Eph. 4. 32; 5. 1.

“Wilt thou draw near the nature of the gods?
Draw near them then in being merciful,”¹⁹

“The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice bless’d;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:
’Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown;
His scepter shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings,
But mercy is above this scepter’d sway;
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings;
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God’s
When mercy seasons justice,”²⁰

and again,

“Consider this—
That in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation; we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy.”

Men may be merciful, as God is merciful; and
in that blessed consummation they find their
highest selves and their highest bliss. Blake
summed up the whole truth when he said,

“To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love,
All pray in their distress;
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.

¹⁹*Titus Andronicus*, Act. i, Sc. 1. 5.

²⁰*Merchant of Venice*, Act. iv, Sc. 1.

“For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
Is God, our Father dear,
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
Is man, his child and care.

“For Mercy has a human heart,
Pity a human face,
And Love, the human form divine,
And Peace, the human dress.

“Then every man of every clime,
That prays in his distress,
Prays to the human form divine,
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

“And all must love the human form,
In heathen, Turk, or Jew;
Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell,
There God is dwelling too.”²¹

5. *Mercy; in the Nations.* This truth has approved itself to most men. Among the many altars erected at Athens one of the oldest was dedicated to Mercy, and at Rome Marcus Aurelius built a temple to Kindness. Buddhism is full of the spirit of gentleness and pity and grace. The Buddha preached mercy in all of his sermons and his most distinguished disciples were among the most merciful of men. King Asoka abolished slavery, built hospitals, alleviated the sufferings of animals and when one said to him on his dying bed, “Now, Asoka, thou wilt enter eter-

²¹Blake, “The Divine Image.”

nal bliss," he answered, "Never of my own free will will I enter paradise while one poor soul wanders outside." Many Christian theologians could take a lesson from that spirit. The Jewish rabbis repeated the sayings of the Old Testament, and said, "Whosoever is merciful to men to him also is mercy extended from heaven," and, "Be ye full of mercy one toward the other, and God will be full of mercy towards you."

Nietzsche objects in *The Antichrist* to all of this teaching, and declares, "Pity is opposed to the tonic passions which enhance the energy of the feeling of life. . . . A man loses power when he pities. . . . Nothing is more unhealthy in the midst of our unhealthy modernity than Christian pity." The world knows now what that doctrine leads to in the unbridled barbarisms and unrestrained *Schrecklichkeit* of the World War, and the world revolts from the man of blood and iron and turns with sympathy again to the pitying spirit of the Gautama Buddha and the "gentle Jesus."

6. *Mercy and Pity.* The word in the beatitude which we translate "merciful," might better be translated "pitying." It is *ἐλεήμονες*, from which we get our word "eleemosynary," and it has a wider meaning than "merciful"

usually connotes. Mercy is only one form of the manifestation of pity. Mercy is shown to a culprit; pity may be felt for the innocent as well. Mercy is displayed by a social or moral superior, but pity can be cherished by an equal or an inferior as well. Pity is the larger word, and more nearly represents the Greek. Jesus did not say, "Blessed are those who do acts of mercy," but "Blessed are those who really cherish within them the spirit of pity." Acts of mercy may be performed from various motives, to be seen by men or to follow the example of the crowd or to create an obligation as well as from the pure feeling of sympathy and the desire to help. The spirit of pity will show pity of course; but Jesus pronounces the beatitude upon the spirit rather than the act.

Almsgiving must wait upon need. Deeds of mercy must depend upon the suitable occasion for them. The spirit of pity may be always present, and in this present evil world it will find abundant opportunity for manifestation. It is a sad world in which we live, and all sad people need sympathy and help. There is so much suffering in the world, and all who are in pain of body or mind are to be pitied, even if they suffer for their own misdeeds. The ignorant deserve pity,

whether they be the ignorant rich or the ignorant poor. Sinners deserve penalty but they deserve pity too; and blessed are those who feel such pity for sinners as Jesus felt.

7. *The Pitying Christ.* He was the compassionate Christ, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, sympathizing with all suffering, pitying and loving all who sinned and laboring for their redemption to the good and their restoration to God. He pitied those who wronged him and mistreated him and crucified him; and he prayed for them that they might know the mercy of God. He felt that they were to be pitied more than he. The ones inflicting injuries were more to be pitied than their victim was. When they misunderstood his pity and rejected it he wept over their doomed city; he pitied them still.

The disciple of Jesus will follow his example and will pity the good and the bad, the just and the unjust. Life is likely to go hard with any of them any day and whenever they are unhappy there is room for pity; and there is no happiness in this world outside the blessed life which Jesus is offering men, and a part of the blessedness he offers is to be found in the loving and sympathetic heart. The Christlike man will be a compassionate man and his benevolence will show in his

countenance, beam from his eye, glow in his face, make his manner sympathetic and his voice consoling and his whole presence radiant with hopefulness and helpfulness. He will be a blessing in himself as well as in his philanthropies.

8. *Cornelius.* Cornelius was such a man and we read that his prayers and his alms came up as a memorial before God. He may have had many other virtues besides these of mercifulness toward others and devotion toward God, but these were sufficient to gain for him the great privilege of being the first Gentile to whom Peter opened the door into the Christian Church. He was blessed above others, he obtained mercy before most, because he himself was merciful.

9. *The Good Samaritan.* The good Samaritan was such a man. He believed in giving to any who asked of him. He believed in helping any man who needed his help. He was on his way from Jericho to Jerusalem one day and he saw a man lying by the side of the road, naked, wounded, and half-dead. The man was unconscious but groaning, and every groan was an appeal to the Samaritan for help. His heart went out to the sufferer in compassion and love. He hastened to his side and spoke to him gently and consolingly and as-

sured him that all danger was past and he would soon be himself again. He applied the simple remedies he had with him as first aid to the injured and bound up his wounds and lifted him to the seat on the back of his beast and walked away with him to the nearest refuge and inn.

He had met a priest just a few minutes before he found the wounded man, and the priest had scowled at him and grudgingly given him the right of way, and the Samaritan had smiled to himself and pitied the man for his hard heart and his disagreeable disposition. Then he had met a Levite who had finished his service in the Temple and was off for a holiday and the Levite had tilted his nose at the Samaritan and had gone by with his head in the air, muttering something about Samaritan dogs who ought to be ruled off the highway where they were likely to meet decent people who belonged to God's elect; and the Samaritan had beamed graciously upon him and pitied him for the narrowness of his soul and the bitterness of his spirit. Then he had come plump upon the suffering man and had forgotten all about them in the haste and the absorbing interest of his ministrations to this needy one.

It was only when he was well on his way

again, leading the beast and carefully avoiding all the stones and ruts in the road, that he had time to bethink himself and to say: "This man evidently has been lying there for some time; the amount of blood he has lost and the condition of his wounds show that. Therefore, that priest and that Levite must have seen him and heard his groans as they passed by. I wonder why they did not stop to help him. They are both professedly religious men. They both know all the Scriptures which command us to be merciful and compassionate even as the Lord God is. They may have been just reading them in the Temple services. Have they read them in vain? How I pity any men who can look on a poor creature like this and not be moved to instant compassion! They may have been preaching to the people in the great assembly the duty of godlike pity and love to all men, and now they have not practiced what they preached. They have had no word of consolation or prayer for this poor wretch.

"They have passed by on the other side and left him half dead and to die as far as they were concerned. They probably thought he was some scamp who would be better dead anyway; and he may be, for all that I know. Could I leave him there to suffer and die,

simply on the chance that he might not have a good character? It was no time to ask about past history; it was time for instant assistance in his dire need. Whatever his past may have been, it may be that this experience will lead him to turn over a new leaf and become a new man. If that priest or that Levite had stopped, they might have put the poor fellow through a catechism to ascertain his character and his creed before they would have bothered themselves to bind up his wounds, but I rather think that it was better to save his life first and later perhaps to inquire into the state of his soul.

“They may have thought that they would get some blood or some dust or some dirt on their clothes, and they may have been lifting their hands in blessing over the great congregation and not have cared to defile their holiness by touching such a revolting sight as this. They may be intending to tell the police authorities about it and send someone out here whose business it is to take care of such secular things. It may have been beneath their dignity or the dignity of their profession to lend a helping hand in a situation of this sort. Nevertheless, I pity them for their hidebound conventionalism and their prejudiced professionalism; I would much rather be free to do

my fellowman a good turn whenever he needs it than to be a Levite or a priest such as those poor fellows are."

He had given of his oil and his wine, he was willing to give of his money and his time, he gave of his hand and his help; and his heart was in it all. He went up that rocky way with a shining face, blessed in the consciousness that he had done his duty by his neighbor in need and thankful that he had had an opportunity to do it.

That night the priest tossed upon his pillow until he fell into a troubled sleep and in his dreaming the angel of the Lord stood before him and said, "Where is that man who had been robbed and wounded and left lying by the way?" and he answered: "I cannot tell. I am not my brother's keeper. I did not know him. I do not know what became of him. I do not want to know." Then in his dream the angel's face shone stern as the lightnings of Sinai and his voice cut like a sword as he said, "Sometimes those who are not their brothers' keepers are their brothers' murderers instead." Then he stooped over the sleeping man and seared his forehead as with a red hot iron, and he said, "It is the brand of Cain who slew his brother." Then he disappeared like a flash, and the priest groaned in his slumber, even as the

wounded man had groaned as he lay on the road.

That same night the Levite dreamed that he was wrestling with his own Evil Conscience and he was having a hard struggle and at last in a breathing spell the evil thing peered into his face and said: "Did you serve God to-day? Did you do your duty in the Temple as a good Levite should?" and he said: "Yes, I did. Why do you ask silly questions like that?" And his Evil Conscience sneered and said: "Do you not know that where there is suffering and need there is God's temple and that the best service of God is to be found in the service of man? Have you loved your neighbor as yourself to-day? How would you have liked to be left on the road to die, if you had fallen among thieves?"

Then the Levite answered: "So that is what you are making all this trouble about, is it? You know as well as I do that we have constituted authorities to take care of all such cases, state authorities, police authorities. When I finished in the Temple my work was done, and if I had stopped to take care of that fellow, who knows how long I would have been delayed? And my folks would have been worrying about me if I had not arrived on time; and I never could have thought of

bringing him on here to my own home, a perfect stranger picked up on the road like that. He might have died on my hands, and I might have been suspected of murder; or at any rate I would have had all the bother of reporting the case and would probably have gotten mixed up in legal proceedings, or I would have had the funeral expenses to pay out of my own pocket; and if by any miracle he had lived he might have turned out to be a thief who would have been all too likely to decamp with all of my valuables as soon as he was strong enough to get away; or he might have been a villain who would have made trouble with my daughters. You never know how such things will turn out. It is better to keep clear of all such complications as I did. Possibly the fellow is dead by this time anyhow; so why bother me any more about him?"

Then the Evil Conscience began to glow like molten brass and he reached out a clawlike hand and clutched at the Levite's heart and pulled at it as though he would wring it from his breast, and when the Levite cried out in anguish the demon leered into his face and said: "A man with no heart is no servant of Israel's God. The two great commandments are, Love the Lord thy God and love thy

neighbor as thyself. On these two hang all the law and the prophets. The man who does not heed these two may as well hang himself. He has no part or lot in the kingdom of God's love." Then the evil thing vanished as in smoke, and the next morning the Levite said to his family: "I never had a worse night in my life. The next time I come down from Jerusalem to Jericho I must have some company. It is a long way to go solitarywise. A man gets strange fancies traveling alone."

The good Samaritan saw the wounded man comfortably disposed in his bed and falling into his first refreshing slumber and then he went to sleep himself and slept soundly all the night through, and just as he was waking in the morning it seemed to him that a Young Man stood by his bedside and said to him: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, you have done it unto me," and the Samaritan awoke with a great gladness in his heart and he went out and found the innkeeper and said to him: "Take care of this man until he is recovered, and charge it all to my account. I will make it right when I return." Then he went on his way rejoicing, the sense of a great blessedness resting upon him all that day.

It is an old story; and we must not forget that it has its present-day application:

“‘Lord, who is my neighbor?’

‘The Samaritan.’

‘Sound the pipe and tabor! Welcome such a man!’

“‘Lord, who is my neighbor?’

‘He the thieves beset.’

‘Though he’ll cause me labor, I will love him yet.’

“‘Lord, who is my neighbor?’

‘The Levite and the Priest.’

‘Even those I may bear, though I’ll love them least.’

“‘Lord, who is my neighbor?’

‘Dear one, I am he.’

‘Lord, ah no! I pray, bare not thy face to me.’”

The good Samaritan spirit will not grudge kindly service to anyone; and it will not fear the face of the Lord at any time.

There are people with the good Samaritan spirit in every community; men and women to whom the suffering and the needy turn at once for help or who seek out the suffering and the needy and are the first to know about them and to minister to them, ready for any kindly office at any time, pitying, serving God’s ministers and God’s blessed ones. We all know them and bless God for them; and we all know that Jesus was right when he said that they would be blessed beyond all comparison with hard-hearted, intolerant, selfish

souls. They will be humble and sympathetic, mourning with those who mourn, meek and lowly in service, hungering and thirsting after righteousness; and they will be comforted and filled with joy and peace, and they will inherit the earth and possess the kingdom, and they will be blessed as no other men are blessed both here and in heaven. They will have the secret of a happy life. They will know life's supreme blessedness.

CHAPTER VI

THE SIXTH BEATITUDE

I. A PATENT TRUTH. Jesus proceeded in his delineation of the character blessed of God, and the next thing he said was no paradox but a simple statement of fact to which his hearers would give instant assent, for everybody would know it was true. He said, "*Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.*" Heart purity is essential to the beatific vision. Had not the writer of the Proverbs said, "He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend"?¹ Had not the writer of the psalm said, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart"?² The Great King would have only the pure in heart for his friends. They alone would be admitted to his presence and see his face and have any intimate association with him. What did the Old Testament say? "Righteous is the Lord, he loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the up-

¹Prov. 22. 11.

²Psa. 24. 3, 4.

right.”³ “As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness.”⁴ “Truly, God is good unto Israel, even unto such as are of a clean heart.”⁵

Isaiah had had a vision of God in the temple, and he had been stricken with terror and he cried, “Woe is me, for I am undone: because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.”⁶ Possibly he would have been burned into a cinder, shriveled into nothingness by that sight if the live coal from off the altar had not immediately removed his iniquity and purged his sin. Only the man of clean lips and pure heart could abide in that Presence or have any converse with that King. When Isaiah described the kingdom of the redeemed in the later days, he said, “And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it.”⁷ It shall be only for those who are pure.

Those who would see the King in his beauty must be like the King’s daughter, all beautiful within. They must follow peace with all, and the holiness without which no man shall see

³Psa. 11. 7.

⁶Isa. 6. 5.

⁴Psa. 17. 15.

⁷Isa. 35. 8.

⁵Psa. 73. 1.

the Lord.⁸ They will be the children of God, and when he shall appear they shall be like him, for they shall see him as he is; for everyone who has this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.⁹ It is a very simple requirement, but it is a basic one. In his Epistle James declares that the wisdom which is from above is first of all pure.¹⁰ It is the first and fundamental characteristic of the children of God. Their characters must be clean. Their essential personalities must be pure. They must be like God to see him as he is or know him as he may be known. Therefore, when James exhorts his readers to draw nigh unto God, he suggests as the first necessity in doing so that the sinners must cleanse their hands and the double-minded must purify their hearts.¹¹

II. HEART PURITY. Jesus said that out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within, and defile the man.¹² The only way to be rid of them is to have the heart pure. The central self

⁸Heb. 12. 14.

⁹1 John 3. 2, 3.

¹⁰Jas. 3. 17.

¹¹Jas. 4. 8.

¹²Mark 7. 21-23.

must be honest and clean and holy. The spring of thought and feeling and action must be purified. It is a simple requirement and yet it is beyond the power of man to attain. A man may scourge his back and starve his body and live in the solitude, and yet not be pure in thought and in heart. He may practice all the rules for holy living found in all the books, and the strictest moral discipline will not make him pure in heart. Only the power of God can do that; but God has promised to do it for all who in poverty of spirit and mourning over their sins, in meekness of dependence and hungering and thirsting after righteousness call upon him.

1. *A Creation.* Therefore the psalmist prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God."¹³ He prayed, not for reparation but for creation. He prayed, not for a clean reputation, not for a morally clean or an externally clean life, but for a clean heart. He prayed, not to be whitewashed without but to be washed white within. He knew that if his heart were clean, his life would be clean. He knew that if the fountain were pure, the stream would be pure. He knew that if the root of the disease were removed, the symptoms of disease would disappear. He knew that what he

¹³Psa. 51. 10.

needed was not reformation but a new creation. He knew that God was the one and only Creator; and he knew that the new heart which God would give would be a clean heart, a heart clean from all defilement of sin.

It is a comprehensive prayer. "Create"—it is a prayer for a new creation. "In me"—It is a prayer for an inward regeneration. "A clean heart"—it is a prayer for heart cleansing and for heart purity. "O God"—it is a prayer addressed to the only source from which this blessing can come. A clean heart is given by divine power and by divine grace, by the washing of regeneration, by the miracle of a new creation. Therefore the psalmist prays, "Create in me a clean heart, O God. It is thy work, for thou art the Creator; and I cannot do the work for myself."

The Hebrew word which the psalmist used is the word which the writer of Genesis used when he said, "God created the heaven and the earth." It is used only of the work of God. Therefore the psalmist prayed, "O Thou who didst create the heaven and the earth; Thou who dost create the new heaven and the new earth in which righteousness dwells; Thou who dost create the new creature, the new man, fit to be an inhabitant of the new world, the new Jerusalem; Thou who hast said, 'Be-

hold, I make all things new,' create Thou within me a clean heart. Only Thou canst make me clean."

2. *An Inward Work.* Men try to make themselves clean; but all that they can do is to scrub the outside or whitewash the exterior, that they may seem to be clean in the sight of other men. That was the indictment of Jesus against the hypocritical Pharisees of his day. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness."¹⁴ Whitewashing is a temporary expedient at the very best. It cannot endure the stress of weather. The rain soaks it off, and the sun bakes it off, and the wind blows it off; and it is not long until the red bricks or the black boards show through again.

Men have been whitewashed by senatorial investigating committees, by Boards of Trus-

¹⁴Matt. 23. 25-27.

tees, by Trial Committees of preachers; and it always is an unsatisfactory business. The thicker the coat of whitewash the sooner it fell away again. The best and most skillful whitewashing ever done will not long stand the stress of wind and weather. Some men have had to be whitewashed two or three times, and each time it was more unsatisfactory than the other. They were what Jesus called "whitewashed sepulchers," looking clean enough on the outside for a while after the whitewash application, but full of corruption within which would persist in thrusting its foulness through the whitewash after a sufficient time had gone by. External applications of whitewash never make a man clean; and external applications of any kind never meet the necessities of the case.

There is that old illustration of painting the pump. A man buys a farm and he finds on the farm an old pump. One day he goes down there and begins to pump up the water; but a neighbor comes hurrying and says: "I want to warn you about that water. It is poisonous, full of deadly germs. The man who lived here before drank of that water and it poisoned him and his wife and his children." The newcomer says: "Thank you for the information. I will soon make that all right."

So he gets some paint and some putty and some whitewash, and he whitewashes the platform and the steps and the trough and he paints the pump and he putties the holes and fills up all the cracks in pump and platform and steps and trough with putty and paint; and he makes everything about there look just as clean and as pretty as a picture. Then he says, "Now I am sure it will be all right." Everyone is ready to say, "What a fool the man is, to paint the pump when the water is bad!"

When the music is bad we do not paint the organ pipes. When the watch does not keep good time we do not put an extra jewel in the case and expect that to improve it. When a building is condemned as unsafe the authorities are not satisfied with a little putty in the cracks and a great deal of paint on the outside. They are not satisfied with a little reconstruction. They demand a rebuilding from the foundation. When a world has gone mad in a world war and then is financially and morally bankrupt in consequence, it is foolish to talk about reconstruction. We do not want to reconstruct a world capable of such folly and sin. We need to rebuild from the foundation. We need a new world, made of new men; and men can be made new, not by re-

construction but only by regeneration. God alone can.

The schoolmaster cannot regenerate. The statesmen never think of undertaking that task. The socialists never have made regeneration a plank in their platform. Only the church has done that, and the church so often flagrantly fails to insist upon this primal necessity for a new world. Education may help the head but it will not make a new heart. Politics is only a plaster on the outside. Evolution and revolution only make changes in the material on hand. This world never will be a new world by reforms from without but only by regeneration from within. A new world can be made only by new men, men with new hearts, clean hearts, pure hearts which will see God and will proceed to make a world after the pattern which he has shown us here in the mount. The Sermon on the Mount has pointed out the way, and the world has rejected it up to this time, with what dire disaster all men may now see. This way of the Master remains to be tried and perfect blessedness is promised to those who will try it. The time may come when both the church and the world will decide to be Christian. Neither of them is Christian as long as world wars are possible, because the majority of men in

them prefer war to peace. It is not paint and putty and whitewash that men need; and they are not to be saved by force and violence and bloodshed.

In the mystery religions of the second century there was the ceremony called the taurobolium, or bath of blood. The candidate for initiation went down into a pit which had a lattice-work top. A bull was slaughtered above this lattice work, and the blood ran through into the pit, where it saturated the clothing of the candidate, and he permitted it to fill his mouth and nose and ears. Then he was told that he was reborn for twenty years, after which he must repeat the rite for further purification. It seems crude and horrible enough to us to-day; but it does not begin to compare in horror and loathsomeness with the experience through which the world has gone in these latter years. The world has gone down into the pit of war, and in the trenches of the far-flung battle lines it has been drenched in blood. Eyes and ears and nose and mouth have been filled with the sight and sound and smell and taste of blood; and the world has not had any rebirth in that baptism. It has no promise now of peace for even twenty years. The war did not end war. Its work has to be done over and over again.

That external application of violence* and bloodshed and force has to be repeated without end. The only hope of a peaceful and happy future lies not in outward application of punishment by power but in inward regeneration. By Grace Divine, God alone can work that change. He can make a new world by making new men, men with clean hearts whose lives will be clean, men who will be clean every whit, from heart to fingertips, to head and feet and tongue, clean all through because their hearts are clean. That is what men need, to be made clean through and through.

3. *A Complete Work.* In the chemist's laboratory, he says, "There is a flask filled with river water taken in last spring's flood," and the visitor replies, "How beautiful and clear that water is!" and he does not notice the thick sediment lying at the bottom of the bottle. The chemist laughs, and says, "I have been analyzing that water and I find there is more dirt in it than in any water I ever have had in my laboratory." Then he takes the bottle up and he gives it a shake or two, and he says, "Do you call that beautiful and clear and clean?" and the visitor looks and sees that the bottle is filled with a thick and yellow fluid mud.

Many a man's experience is like that, beautifully clear and clean as long as he is undisturbed and at peace; but if anything comes along and jars him and shakes him up a little, all the dirt there is in him comes to the surface and all his nature turns into a turbid flood. Next on the shelf in the chemist's laboratory is a flask of mountain spring water. You may shake it as much as you please, and it will be just as clean and just as clear; for it has no sediment at the bottom, it is clean all through. The psalmist believed that a man's nature could be made clean all through. He prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." Jesus believed that a man could be pure in heart. He said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

It has been suggested that a great many people have a Jack-in-the-box religion. A Jack-in-the-box remains very quiet and is unseen until a little spring is touched, and then the lid flies back and Jack pops up in full vigor. In like manner there are many people who try to hide the old nature within them, try to keep down "the old man," as Paul calls him, with all his deeds. They know well enough that he is there, but they try to hide him from the eyes of other people. Then sometime or other somebody comes along and

touches a spring unexpectedly, a spring of jealousy or pride or temper, and up flies the lid and out pops the old man in all his life and vigor. We may try to hide him; but if he is locked up there in some corner of the heart, we cannot hope to succeed. Sooner or later he will betray us and show that he is not dead. It is best to put away the old man with all his deeds, and to be made new men in Christ Jesus with new hearts and pure hearts which will have nothing to betray.

A recent writer has put this truth into another and more elegant form. He likens the impure heart to a smoldering volcano. "The volcano is quiet and silent for years. No fires and lava pour forth from its crater. Meanwhile people venture up its slopes, and lay out their gardens, and build their villas, and plant their vineyards; and flowers bloom, and fruits hang in purple clusters, and beauty covers the once fire-swept, lava-furrowed mountain slopes. But has the volcano really been tamed? Have its fires been put out? Is all permanently peaceful in the mountain's heart? And is it otherwise in the breast of him who has merely trained himself into good moral and ethical habits? What the best mere self-culture can do for a life is no more than the planting of flowers and vineyards on

the volcano's sides while all the fires still burn within, ready to break forth any day in all their old fury. Good manners are not religion. The heart must be changed. The heart of stone must be made a heart of flesh."

III. HOW IS HEART PURITY OBTAINED? The old heart with all of its passions and lusts must be changed into a new heart which will love God and goodness and purity and peace. How can a man get a heart like that? One man says: "I will take all of my sins together, and I will fight it out with them; and I will see which is the stronger, they or I. I believe that by opposing I can end them." So he enters into a fierce struggle with himself and all his besetting sins. After a time he stands up with his face radiant with victory and he says: "I am master of myself at last. I have all of those things under my feet. I have fought it out with them and now all my besetting sins are dead."

He soon discovers, however, that it is like that old fable of Antæus. Thrown to the ground and apparently prostrate and defeated and dead, the old giant Antæus received new life and new strength from the mere contact with Mother Earth each time, and he was soon resurrected and ready to begin the struggle over again. It is that way with the man who

takes the sins of his own heart and says, "I will fight with them and by opposing end them." They have nine lives in them or ninety and nine. They have a strange and almost supernatural power of resurrection, and no man by struggling in his own strength ever was able to put them all finally and forever to death.

Another man says: "I do not believe in making any violent effort like that. I believe that a man can get purity of heart by gradually growing into it. I believe in the cultivation of Christian graces. I believe in the exclusive power of new affections. Paul says, 'Put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.' Then he says, 'Put on kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.' I intend to cultivate these things in my heart and to cultivate those things out of my heart, even as Paul says; and I will grow in grace in that way."

The trouble about that quotation from Paul is that he does not say anything about growing out of or growing into these things. Paul says, "Put off" and "Put on." It is like putting off an old coat and putting on a new one. A man does not say, "I will grow out of this old coat, and then I will grow into a new one."

The old coat would get more and more ragged while he was growing out of it, and the new one would fade and get motheaten before he would grow into it. No; a man says, "I will put off my old coat and I will put on my new coat; and then I will grow in my coat, but I will not grow into it."

A garden is full of weeds. The owner does not say, "I will plant flower seeds in this garden, and then I will grow the weeds out of it by growing flowers into it." No; he takes his hoe and his rake and his fingers, and he pulls the weeds out and then he makes his flowerbed.

The little child comes in from the street where he has been playing with the dog, and his hands and his face and his clothes are covered with dirt. The mother does not say to him, "I would like you to grow out of that dirt and to grow up into a clean boy." She takes him by the arm and leads him out to the washroom and she dusts his clothes and she washes his face and his hands until they are clean; and then she sends him out to grow as fast as he can.

It is just so with the heavenly Father and his children. They do not grow into cleanliness; but he washes them and makes them clean. Their testimony is, "Not by works of

righteousness which we had done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom he richly poured forth upon us through Jesus Christ our Saviour,"¹⁵ and again, "Unto him that loveth us and hath washed us from our sins in his own blood and hath made us a kingdom, priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever."¹⁶

Origen said, "Every sin puts filth upon the soul."¹⁷ The Bible brands all sin as unclean. It is an unutterable abomination in the eyes of the Holy One with whom we have to do. Wherever sin touches any being, there is that being unclean and unholy in the sight of God. To be sinful is the same as to be unclean before him. It is no outward uncleanness necessarily; but an inward, spiritual uncleanness which fastens upon the inner man and which spots and pollutes and infects the soul and heart, the mind and will. A dirty Christian is a disgrace to the name. The Christian who is a credit to his profession will be a clean man, with clean person, clean clothes, clean habits, a clean heart, and a clean character.

¹⁵Titus 3. 5, 6.

¹⁶Rev. 1. 5, 6.

¹⁷ Πᾶσα ἁμαρτία ῥύπον ἐντίθησι τῇ ψυχῇ.

Lloyd George was addressing the Wesleyans in London and he said to them: "John Wesley was a man who had a special abhorrence of anything that was not neat and clean. . . . You remember what he said to a Derbyshire girl who ran to the door as he passed and cried, 'God bless you, Mr. Wesley!' He said, 'Young woman, your blessing would be of more value if your face and apron were cleaner.'" John Wesley did not care to be praised by the unclean: neither does John Wesley's God.

Cleanness within and cleanliness without—this is the distinguishing characteristic of his children. The command of God is, "Wash you, make you clean," and the man who obeys that command is a disciple. The man who consciously and persistently refuses to obey that command is not worthy of discipleship. The promise of God is, "I will also save you from all your uncleannesses." The man who realizes the fulfillment of that promise is the man whom God delights to honor. The man who does not realize fully in his own experience the verification of that promise may be endured of God and may be endured in the church, but he is not the man whom either God or the church will delight to honor.

IV. NECESSITY OF HEART PURITY. God has

said to his people: "My children are to differ from the children of this world in this one particular, that they are clean. Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as his Lord is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. Sinners are unclean, but my children are clean in heart and clean in life. That is their distinguishing mark. I have stated to them that I have opened up a fountain for sin and uncleanness. I promise them that I will sprinkle clean water upon them and they shall be clean; from all their filthiness will I cleanse them. Only to those who are ready to accept that promise and to realize that experience do I give a new heart and a pure heart, and only such do I recognize as my children.

"It is my command and my promise to my people that they come out from among the sinners, and be separate and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive them and be a Father unto them and they shall be my sons and daughters. If anyone prefer to cling to anything unclean, I make no promise to him of adoption. Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see me, and they alone. Without holiness no man can see me. There

is my unqualified statement of an absolutely irreversible and unchangeable truth. Under no other condition is any hope held out to any man of the supreme blessedness, except that he shall be clean. There is no other way into my kingdom here upon earth or there in heaven than this way of cleansing from sin. I have told all men that I could and would save them from sin. Now, whom shall I admit to my temple? Who shall stand in my holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart, and he alone. My people must be clean."

We recall that scene at the Last Supper of the Lord with his disciples. Jesus rose from the table and took a towel and girded himself, and he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded. When he came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." Then Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." The whole action is symbolical. It was a parable, the last parable of our Lord's preaching, a parable of deeds and not only of words; and one lesson of that parable to all the nations and all the generations is

this: God's children must be clean. They cannot wash themselves. There is only One who can wash them and make them clean every whit; and if he wash them not, they have no part with him, for God will have his people clean.

Spiritual purity is the essential condition of fellowship with God and of recognition in his family. Therefore the children of God always have prayed with the psalmist, "Wash us thoroughly from our iniquities, and cleanse us from our sins; purge us with hyssop, and we shall be clean; wash us, and we shall be whiter than snow."¹⁸ Our God hates dirt. He demands that his people be clean. He says through his prophet, "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes: cease to do evil, learn to do well. . . . Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."¹⁹

Scarlet and crimson are fast colors. The word in the Hebrew suggests the deepest dye, the double dye, in which the cloth was dipped again and again into the coloring fluid, and

¹⁸Psa. 51. 2, 7.

¹⁹Isa. 1. 16, 17, 18.

left soaking there until the scarlet or crimson was ineradicably fixed in the fiber, so that the cloth would wear out before the color would wear off. "Come now," saith the Lord, "let us reason together. Though your soul has been dipped into sin again and again and again, until it has been stained scarlet in transgression; and though that stain be ineffaceable forever, as far as any human agency is concerned; and though your body will wear out and your soul will wear out before that stain will wear off; though your sins be as double-dyed crimson, I can make you as white as snow." That is the promise of salvation from sin, impossible to men, possible only to Omnipotence; but promised by Omnipotence to men.

Lady Macbeth goes wringing her hands in the great drama, and saying: "Here's a spot! a spot of the old man's blood. Will these hands ne'er be clean? Here's the smell of blood still; all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this blood-stained hand." Water would not wash the murder-stain away. She might have rubbed her hands together until they were worn to the bone, but the scarlet stain of sin would have been on them still. No power on earth could cleanse that stain away, and make the hands and the heart clean

again from their guilt; but God's omnipotence can accomplish that wonder. God says, "I will also save you from all your uncleannesses." Only Omnipotence could say that. God says it to every man.

That is the design of his revelation to the race, to save it from sin, to make it clean. Every Christian is a clean man. That is the proof of his salvation. That is the acid test of his genuine discipleship. God saves from sin, and from nothing else but sin. If a man is saved, he is saved from sin; not from hell primarily, not from poverty primarily, not from affliction surely, not from temptation frequently, but always completely from sin. Yet there are people who call themselves Christians who go about with a sneer upon their lips for anyone who says that he is saved from sin. It is perfectly clear that somebody is egregiously fooled in this matter, either those who think they are saved from sin or those who think they are saved, when they are not saved from sin.

The gospel of Jesus is a gospel of salvation from sin. It began with that message of the angel of the annunciation, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he is to save his people from their sins."²⁰ It is continued here in the

²⁰Matt. 1. 21.

great sermon when Jesus says, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." When the sermon was finished, Jesus went down to the plain and a leper came and worshiped him, saying, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Then Jesus put forth his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be thou clean," and his leprosy was cleansed from that hour.

Leprosy was an incurable disease, but the Lord could cleanse it. The leprosy of sin is incurable by human power; but God can make the heart clean. He who comes to him, praying, "Create in me a clean heart, O God," may feel his touch saving to the uttermost, purifying the very heart and cleansing the very center of the being, and may hear his voice saying, "I will; be thou clean." That will be the fiat of Omnipotence. God said, "Let there be light!" and there was light. When God says to a yielding, believing soul, "Be clean!" the work is done. It is Omnipotence commanding it. It is the fiat of the Creator; and it goes into immediate execution.

V. CONDITION OF SECURITY. We were out on the Pacific Ocean when fire was discovered in the hold. It had been smoldering there for some hours. Everything possible was done to put the fire out, but there were no appli-

ances on board which could master it. The crew could not get at it. Water did not seem to reach it. The captain finally decided that we could not cope with it and the only thing to do was to turn sharp around and make for the nearest port. We were burning oil for fuel, and if the fire reached the oil tanks, there would be an explosion or such a fierce conflagration that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to escape. The hatches were battened down to keep the air from the smoldering hemp bales in the hold, and all the vents were hooded; but the smoke coming up here and there through the deck showed that we might expect an outburst of flame at any moment. We were assigned to the lifeboats and all one day we sat and waited for the signal to leap into them to save our lives. At night we reached harbor and, safely moored at the dock, the fire department of the city of Wellington soon removed all the burning cargo, and, after a few days, with the hold filled with new and safe lading, we sailed out confidently again upon the sea.

Is not that a parable? No man is safe in the voyage of life as long as he has a hold full of inflammable and smoldering material. The cargo must be changed before there can be any security. Parliament House was not

safe as long as Guy Fawkes was hiding in the cellar. The king in his castle cannot feast in all confidence if the dungeons below are filled with disloyal and armed people. No man is saved until his heart is pure. If he cannot manage it for himself, there is only one thing for him to do. He must flee for safety to the place and the power which is able to cope with the situation he is unable to control. There is only one such place—the presence of God. There is only one such power—the power of God.

God can make the heart pure and keep it pure. Then the man will be pure in his habitual thoughts and his purposes and his life. He will have a clean mind. His cherished thoughts will be like white angels, worthy to stand in the holiest sanctuary of earth or heaven. That mind will be in him which was in Christ Jesus, a mind which will instinctively repel anything which defiles; but whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report—these are the things that he will think upon. Both the meditations of his heart and the words of his mouth will be acceptable in the sight of his Lord.

A horrible crime is committed in the

shadow of a church altar. The circumstantial evidence points to a young man who is an official in the Sunday School. Go and ask the young men with whom he has associated, the students in the school, what he has been saying to them in private conversation. Do they tell you that he has regaled them frequently with tales that were vile, and that he seemed to delight in such narrations? That is the worst circumstantial evidence which can be brought against the man. A professing Christian, all the chambers of whose imagination are hung with pictures which are degrading and obscene and all whose conversation is filled with the repetition of such things, is a hypocrite capable of any crime.

A man with pure heart will keep his thoughts pure. Although he may be assailed with temptation from morning to night, the opportunities to impurity presented to eye and to ear from showbills and newspapers, in periodicals and in books, he will be on his guard constantly that these things may find no abiding-place in his thoughts and no room among the cherished affections of his heart. In the secret places of his being he will not be found bowing down to unclean idolatries. As a reward there will be given to him the beatific vision. It will follow as the effect

follows the cause. It will have all the certainty of a natural law. It is the natural law in the spiritual world.

VI. THE BEATIFIC VISION. Purity of heart is the necessary condition of vision and it is the inevitable consequence of vision. The sight of God is the reward of heart purity, and heart purity is the result of seeing God. Shelley saw the truth when he wrote, "Blessed are those who have preserved internal sanctity of soul; who are conscious of no secret deceit; who are the same in act as they are in desire; who conceal no thought, no tendencies of thought from their own conscience; who are faithful and sincere witnesses, before the tribunal of their own judgments, of all that passes within their minds. Such as these shall see God in nature and in man himself."

They shall see God in creation and in conscience, in nature and in providence. They shall see him in the sunshine and in the storm, in the rivers and the hills. They shall recognize his majesty in the mountain heights and the ocean depths. They shall see his beauty in the flowers and the trees. They shall realize his wisdom in all the orderliness of the universe. They shall trace his goings through all the histories of men. They shall commune with God where other men pick blackberries.

Where other men see only human selfishness and sin, the pure in heart will find the divine image. Some spark of goodness, deep buried beyond the surface sight, will speak to them of God. Like Jesus, they will see the goodness of God in the clothing of the lily and the cry of the raven. Like Jesus they will see in the most dissolute and depraved the God in their heart, the latent possibility of development into sainthood and all the blessedness of the children of God.

Among the physical senses we prize the boon of sight most highly. We pity the deaf and the dumb, but we pity most the blind. All men see the wonders of Nature and the mysteries of Man, but most men do not see God when they see these things. The pure in heart see God at the center of the universe and in all the fleeting phenomena of time. Every man knows that he must keep his eyes clear of all impurities if he would have his vision clear. Even a mote will wound the delicate mechanism of the eye, and the smallest atom may blind it with tears and obscure its power of seeing. So few men seem to realize that the least stain of sin upon the soul and the smallest impurity cherished in the heart will render impossible any clear sight of God.

Only the pure in heart can see him, but they

can see him everywhere and they can see him now. Their vision of him is not physical but spiritual. It is intuitive and immediate. It means that they live as in God's presence. They have direct and continuous communion with him. They endure as seeing Him who is invisible to others. Reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, they are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord. They have the beatific vision of the saints here and now, and some time they will have the perfect vision of the redeemed in the glory of the completed Kingdom of the Son. Some time they shall see God face to face. In the historic Jesus they see him now; in the glorified Jesus they will see him then.

CHAPTER VII

THE SEVENTH BEATITUDE:
INDICTMENT OF WAR

JESUS pronounced six beatitudes upon the poor in spirit, the mourners, the meek, the hungry and thirsting after righteousness, the merciful, and the pure in heart. They serve to make reasonably clear the ideal of character Jesus had in mind. Seven is the perfect number to the Hebrews. Jesus added the seventh beatitude, which is either perfect wisdom or perfect folly. It is one or the other. It cannot be both. He said, "*Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.*" In the light of this statement let us see what war is.

1. *Negation of the Sermon on the Mount.* War is the antithesis of all that Jesus stands for, the negation of the whole spirit of the Sermon on the Mount. There is no portion of the Scripture which is more unpopular in war time than this sermon of the Prince of Peace. He preached love; war breeds hate. He preached universal brotherhood; war means the wholesale massacre of men. He

preached truth; war cannot thrive except upon deception and lies. He preached individual responsibility; war makes men into machines. He came to give men life; war comes to give men death. He taught that man's supreme duty was to God; war teaches that no squeamish conscience must hinder unquestioning loyalty to the military command, whether that command be to poison, murder, maim, or burn.

A soldier must not make reply. A soldier must not reason why. He must be an automaton, a machine. He must abnegate his own judgment and free will, or get out of the ranks. If he pleads that loyalty to God forbids obedience to vicious orders, he must be court-martialed and imprisoned or hung. If he is a pacifist, he must be ready for persecution. Militarism has no use for freedom of speech or freedom of thought or freedom of action, if any of these things dare to declare themselves in opposition to its behests. Jesus came to bring peace upon the earth; every great war postpones the possibility of peace for generations or for millenniums. There is absolute opposition between these two, the spirit of Jesus and the spirit of Mars. Every man must choose between them. He cannot love one and serve the other. Sydney Smith

said, "God is forgotten in war; every principle of Christianity is trampled upon."

2. *Negation of the Beatitudes.* It surely is the negation of all the beatitudes. The poor in spirit do not depend upon armies and navies for help. The mourners do not find their comfort in making others to mourn. The meek inherit but they do not ravage and devastate the earth. The hungering and the thirsting after righteousness do not hunger and thirst after their brother's blood. The merciful do not delight in wholesale murder and all the horrors and aggressions of war. The pure in heart do not need the prophylactic treatments so common among the officers and the rank and file in the Great War. The pacifists will not pander to the blood lust and the hate propaganda inseparable from the successful prosecution of any war.

The disciples of Jesus are known by the love they have one to another. The minions of Mars sow the seeds of hate in all hearts. The teaching of Jesus dignifies human nature and declares the supreme value of the individual personality and raises the savage into the saint. The teaching of militarism robs the individual of all initiative, degrades the man into a machine, wastes human lives as if they were of no value at all, and sends the

race back into the instincts of the jungle and turns men into hyenas and wolves. Nothing could be more inconsistent with the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount and of the beatitudes than the inevitable hatreds and brutalities in the conduct of any war.

3. *Negation of the Spirit of Jesus.* War fosters brute passions and gives men the blood lusts of the beasts. The genius of Shakespeare has pictured all human life for us, and he has shown us how war, the son of hell, destroys pity and enthrones passion and the lust of vengeance in man's breast. The Duke of York has slain Lord Clifford with the sword and then young Clifford finds his father's corpse and at once exclaims:

. . . "Even at this sight
 My heart is turned to stone; and while 'tis mine,
 It shall be stony. York not our old men spares;
 No more will I their babes: tears virginal
 Shall be to me even as the dew to fire,
 And beauty that the tyrant oft reclaims
 Shall to my flaming wrath be oil and flax.
 Henceforth I will not have to do with Pity;

 In cruelty will I seek out my fame."¹

One dastardly deed begets another. One outrage demands revenge; and at last pity dies and cruelty is enthroned and neither

¹Shakespeare, *King Henry Sixth*, Act v, Sc. 2.

babes nor virgins are spared on either side. No limit is allowed to the mad lust for blood and rapine. Jesus is forgotten, and moral evil is in control.

General Sherman was justified in his famous pronouncement: "I confess without shame that I am tired and sick of the war. Its glory is all moonshine. It is only those who have neither heard a shot nor heard the shrieks and groans of the wounded who cry aloud for more blood, more vengeance, more desolation. War is hell."

War is physically fratricidal and morally suicidal. War blinds and maims and kills. Jesus opened the eyes of the blind and restored the crippled limbs and gave men life and more abundant life. Jesus brought healing and salvation. War scatters disease and death. Jesus ministered to the masses in helpfulness and love. War mows down the millions with his scythe and butchers men like sheep and sows the seeds of revenge and hate broadcast over the continents and among the nations of men. Jesus preached purity of heart and life. War breeds impurity and has no respect for either innocence or virtue.

Jesus sent out his apostles to be ministers to men. War sends out its soldiers to be murderers of men, and murder cannot be ennobled

by organizing it on a national scale and sanctioning it with such names as patriotism and progress. James Russell Lowell stated the plain truth of the matter as it appears to the unsophisticated mind when he wrote,

“Ez fer war, I call it murder—
 There you hev it plain and flat;
 I don’t want to go no furder
 Than my Testyment fer that.

“Taint your eppyletts and feathers
 Make the thing a grain more right;
 ’Taint afollerin’ your bell-wethers
 Will excuse ye in His sight.

“Ef you take a sword an’ dror it
 An go stick a feller thru;
 Guv’ment aint to answer fer it,
 God’ll send the bill to you.

“Wut’s the use o’ meetin’-goin’
 Every Sabbath, wet or dry,
 Ef it’s right to go a mowin’
 Feller-men like oats and rye?

“I dunno but what it’s pooty
 Trailin ’round in bobtail coats;
 But it’s curus Christian dooty,
 This ’ere cuttin’ folks’s throats.”

War does physical damage, but it is a spiritual devastation as well. It turns brother-men into bloodthirsty beasts, going up and down seeking whom they may devour. It fosters prejudice, creates antagonism, perpetuates

animosity. It violates the spirit of Jesus, and outrages the finest sensibilities of man.

The religion of Jesus would enthrone justice and give the right of way to reason and persuasion. War recognizes no right but that of might and gains its ends by violence and compulsion alone. The precepts of Jesus would insure peace and plenty. War always brings famine and pestilence in its wake. It pillages the home and impoverishes the land. It is pitiless and ruthless and relentless and remorseless. It spares neither helpless old age nor defenseless infancy; but its mighty harvest of death is reaped principally from the ranks of the young men. In companies and brigades it herds them into the shambles and slaughters them by millions under the pretext that the world will be better when they are gone.

Those who escape death are many of them morally bankrupted, for war is hell, and the business of war has to be conducted in the atmosphere of hell, and the most efficient soldiers are the ones who at the moment of need can be transformed into demons of destruction, killing without hesitation and without limit, behaving like incarnate devils with all the unbridled passions of the infernal regions in free play. War demoralizes men and makes

them inhuman, sub-human; and then leaves many of them heart-hardened, and some of them shell-shocked and insane. The work of slaying their fellow men—and that is what war is in its naked reality—cannot be ennobling. It is hideous, horrible, debasing, degrading; and no amount of beautiful phrases can hide its real character.

War is evil in its origin and in its methods and in its results. It is a sin in its inception and in its progress and in its disappointing and demoralizing and devastating end. It is a crime against humanity and a sin against God. To cloak its inherently corrupting character behind rhetorical eulogies is not the business of a minister of Christ, but only of the paid agents of the devil. In the light of our gospel war is an anachronism and a survival from brute beginnings and from heathen days. The Christian Church can recognize it as a fact, but never as a right.

In Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, he tells us: "Dr. Johnson laughed much over Lord Kaimes' opinion that war was a good thing occasionally, as so much valor and virtue were exhibited in it. 'A fire,' said Johnson, 'might as well be thought a good thing; there is the bravery and the address of the firemen in extinguishing it; there is much humanity

exerted in saving the lives and the properties of the poor sufferers; yet, after all, who can say a fire is a good thing?"

Shall we start a city conflagration occasionally in order to call out the civic virtues of bravery and generosity? Shall we scatter cholera germs broadcast occasionally so that doctors and nurses and patients may have opportunity to display heroic qualities? We regard these things as evils, and evils only, and we labor for their abolition. Ought we not to be just as resolute in our denunciation of war, and to feel that any praise of it as an occasion for valor is just as ridiculous? Occasions for valor are numerous enough without wars. Sailors and miners risk their lives as often as most soldiers; and to good, not bad ends. Scientists and physicians sacrifice themselves more than most soldiers, and in order to save life, not to destroy it. Missionaries are heroes as well as soldiers, just as chivalrous and faithful to duty as any soldiers are apt to be.

We do not need wars to cultivate virtues. They propagate vices instead. War makes more devils than angels. It is not the triumph of love, but of hate. It is not the symbol of heaven, but of hell. For one heart made virtuous in war scores are made vicious. There

is more valor than virtue in war and there is more vice than of either or both.

Charles Dickens once said, "We talk exultingly, and with a certain fire, of 'a magnificent charge,' of 'a splendid charge,' yet very few think of the hideous particulars these two airy words stand for. The 'splendid charge' is a headlong rush of men on strong horses, urged to their fullest speed, riding down and overwhelming an opposing mass of men on foot. The reader's mind goes no further, being content with the information that the enemy's line was broken and gave way. It does not fill in the picture. When the 'splendid charge' has done its work, and passed by, there will be found a sight very much like the scene of a frightful railway accident. There will be the full complement of backs broken in two; of arms twisted wholly off; of men impaled on their own bayonets; of legs smashed up like bits of firewood; of heads sliced open like apples; of other heads crunched into soft jelly by iron hoofs of horses; of faces trampled out of all likeness to anything human. That is what skulks behind a 'splendid charge.' This is what follows, as a matter of course, when 'our fellows rode at them in style, and cut them up famously.'"

That is not the whole of the story, either.

It is true that a railway accident is horrible; but it is an accident. It may be that no one is to blame; and the sufferers from it are pitied and helped by all. All hearts are only softened by it, all sympathies are stirred to do what can be done to make good the loss of life and limb. It is not so with the aftermath of the splendid charge in war. That charge was intended to do its hideous work. The perpetrators of it are held responsible for it, rightly enough; and if those who suffered from it hate them forever, it is their own fault. They cannot expect to be loved for such devilish deeds. Unless some religious miracle is wrought among their foes they may expect dire vengeance as soon as it may be made possible.

4. *Negation of Civilization and Religion.* The atrocities of war cannot be concealed behind fine phrases. War is the negation of civilization and war is the negation of religion. John Wesley wrote to Thomas Rankin, "When a land is visited with famine, or plague, or earthquake, the people commonly see and acknowledge the hand of God. But whenever war breaks out, God is forgotten, if he be not set at open defiance. What a glorious work of God was at Cambuslang and Kilsythe, from 1740 to 1744! But the war that

followed tore it all up by the roots, and left scarce any trace of it behind; insomuch that when I diligently inquired a few years after, I could not find one that retained the life of God."² It was small wonder that in the days of the American Revolution John Wesley preached "an awful sermon, on the horrid effects of a civil war," in which he said "that, of all scourges from God, war was the most to be deprecated, because it often swept away all traces of religion, and even of humanity."³

The preacher who blesses war and under the guise of patriotism praises its hellish work is the devil's advocate in the pulpit. He may have his reward in the popularity of the moment, but in the sober judgment of all sane and pious people he will be despised. As surely as Judas he has betrayed his Lord.

All great natural disasters, great fires, great floods, earthquakes, tornadoes affect a single and limited locality, but a great war covers a continent and involves the world. The liquor habit, the drug habit, the opium habit, indulgence in sexual vice touch only a certain percentage of the population in any land, but a great war brings suffering and loss to all

²Wesley, *Works*, vii, 10.

³Tyerman, *Life and Times of John Wesley*, vol. iii, p. 185.

alike—to women and men, to young and old, to rich and poor, to victor and vanquished. It has no respect of persons. It does what it can to ruin the whole race. The future of civilization, therefore, depends upon the abolition of war. Herbert Spencer saw that truth clearly and declared, “Advance to the highest forms of man and society depends upon the decline of militancy and the growth of industrialism. Hence the limit of evolution can be reached by conduct only in permanently peaceful societies.”⁴ If civilization does not end war, war will end civilization; and that possibility came within sight during the last great conflict.

5. *Negation of Reason.* War is a riot of unreason. It fears neither God nor man. It defies the laws of God and it denies the worth of man. John Wesley saw clearly the inherent foolishness of it. He said: “Here are forty thousand men gathered together on this plain. What are they going to do? See, there are thirty or forty thousand more at a little distance. And these are going to shoot them through the head or body, to stab them, or split their skulls, and send most of their souls into everlasting fire, as fast as possibly they can. Why so? What harm have they done

⁴Spencer, *Data of Ethics*, p. 19.

to them? Oh, none at all! They do not so much as know them. But a man, who is king of France, has a quarrel with another man, who is king of England. So these Frenchmen are to kill as many of these Englishmen as they can, to prove the king of France is in the right.

“Now, what an argument is this! What a method of proof! What an amazing way of deciding controversies! What must mankind be, before such a thing as war could ever be known or thought of upon earth? How shocking, how inconceivable a want must there have been of common understanding, as well as common humanity, before any two governors, or any two nations in the universe, could think of such a method of decision!

“If then all nations, pagan, Mohammedan, and Christian, do, in fact, make this their last resort, what further proof do we need of the utter degeneracy of all nations from the plainest principles of reason and virtue! of the absolute want, both of common sense and common humanity, which runs through the whole race of mankind? . . . Surely, all our declamations on the strength of human reason, and the eminence of our virtues, are no more than the cant and jargon of pride and ignorance, so long as there is such a

thing as war in the world. Men in general can never be allowed to be reasonable creatures, till they know not war any more. So long as this monster stalks uncontrolled, where is reason, virtue, humanity? They are utterly excluded; they have no place; they are a name, and nothing more.”⁵

This may be the original from which Carlyle drew his paragraph in *Sartor Resartus* in which he pictures thirty men taken from useful employments in the British village of Dumdrudge and sent into Spain and then thirty French artisans brought there to meet them, and then says, “Thirty stands fronting Thirty, each with a gun in his hand. Straightway the word ‘Fire!’ is given; and they blow the souls out of one another; and in place of sixty brisk useful craftsmen, the world has sixty dead carcasses, which it must bury, and anew shed tears for. Had these men any quarrel? Busy as the Devil is, not the smallest! They lived far enough apart; were the entirest strangers; nay, in so wide a Universe, there was even, unconsciously, by Commerce, some mutual helpfulness between them. How then? Simpleton! their Governors had fallen out; and, instead of shooting one another, had the cunning to make these poor blockheads

⁵Wesley, *Works*, vol. v, pp. 512-513.

shoot." Carlyle seems to think that only blockheads would do it.

Conscription takes men out of peaceful and useful occupations and compels them to fight for a cause of which they may have only the dimmest comprehension, in localities it may be of which they never had heard, against an enemy with whom they never had a shadow of disagreement. Both they and their opponents are told that they must kill each other in the sacred cause of liberty or democracy or country or right; and only fools would think that the right of any matter could be established in that way. There is an inherent absurdity in war. There is an apparent insanity in war. It is "a brutal, barbarous, and insane method of settling international disputes." Viscount Morley was right when he said, "That is the worst of war; it ostracises, demoralizes, brutalizes reason."

War is the negation of all reason on the part of the race. It is as futile as it is foolish. Lord Avebury, in his volume on *Peace and Happiness*, is right when he says: "If the so-called Christian nations were nations of Christians, there would be no wars. The present state of Europe is a disgrace to us, not only as men of common sense, but as being altogether inconsistent with any form of reli-

gious conviction." War upsets the moral poise of a people. It disturbs their mental balance. It dethrones their reason. It destroys their conscience. It makes them temporarily delirious, war-crazy, incapable of hearing or heeding the words of calmness or wisdom, and utterly deaf to the still small voice of God.

Herodotus tells us that Cræsus said to Cyrus, "No one is so foolish as to prefer war to peace—war in which, instead of sons burying their fathers, fathers bury their sons." It was the utter foolishness of the procedure which impressed him most. The same thing was true of Benjamin Franklin. In 1780 he wrote, "We make great improvements in natural, there is one I wish to see in moral, philosophy; the discovery of a plan which would induce and oblige nations to settle their disputes without first cutting one another's throats. When will human reason be sufficiently improved to see the advantage of this?"

It is not reason which rules in time of war; it is hysteria. It is not surprising that H. G. Wells should pronounce his judgment upon it, "I have never imagined a quarter of the boredom, its futility, its desolation. It is a gigantic, dusty, muddy, weedy, bloody silliness."

That is the right word for it. It is the negation of reason. It is a sin and it is a preposterously silly sin.

Cicero said that he preferred the most unjust peace to the most just war. Benjamin Franklin declared that there never had been a bad peace or a good war. George Washington branded war as the plague of mankind, and in 1785 he wrote to a friend, "My first wish is to see this plague of mankind banished from off the earth, and the sons and daughters of this world employed in more pleasing and innocent amusements, than in preparing implements and exercising them for the destruction of mankind." To Lafayette he wrote, "It is a strange thing that there should not be room enough in this world for men to live without cutting each other's throats."

It is the feeling commonly expressed by the great generals. Wellington said: "War is a most detestable thing. If you had seen but one day of war, you would pray God that you might never see another," and General Grant testified: "Though educated a soldier, and though I have gone through two wars, I have always been a man of peace, preferring to see questions of difference settled by arbitration. It has been my misfortune to be engaged in more battles than any other American general,

but there never was a time during my command when I would not have chosen some settlement by reason rather than the sword."

John Hay called war "the most ferocious and futile of human follies." Sir William Butler said, "War is the sum of all wrongdoing; and it holds every other possible injustice in it." Erasmus wrote *The Plea of Reason, Religion, and Humanity Against War*, and in it he said: "Peace is of all things the happiest and best. War, on the contrary, is the blackest villainy of which human nature is capable." "If there be anything in the affairs of mortals which it is in the interests of men not only to attack, but which ought by every possible means to be avoided, condemned, and abolished, it is of all things war, than which nothing is more impious, more calamitous, more widely pernicious, more inveterate, more base, or in sum more unworthy of a man, not to say of a Christian."

John Bright asserted, "War is the grave of all good, whether in administration or legislation, and it throws power into the hands of the most worthless of the class of statesmen." The Mirrors of Downing Street and the Mirrors of Washington go far to prove the truth of that statement, as far as the late world war was concerned.

That was the most wicked and monstrous event in human history. Who were the men who were responsible for it? Certain individuals with petty passions and ambitions and greeds, moral weaklings for the most part, ruthlessly involving the nations in a holocaust of fanatical slaughter and hate. How did they do it? By prating of patriotism, by the lying propaganda of the press, by enlisting the pulpit as a camouflaged adjunct of the government, and finally by conscripting the best manhood in all the lands and sending them out to shoot each other at sight.

Then in all the armies and through all the battlefields it was true,

“The devil’s kingdom is come,
Ill is the news I tell,
The devil’s will is done
On earth as it is in hell.”

At the end of the war General Smuts, premier of South Africa, said, “Never has there been so much hatred in the world; never have people everywhere hated each other so much; never has hatred been so great and so deep.” It will take generations to recover from it. It will take centuries to heal its wounds. The coming of the kingdom of God upon the earth has been postponed by it for some decades or millenniums.

Out of the economic and moral ruins of the present day a new world must be built, a world of peacemakers instead of warmakers, a world of co-operation instead of competition, a world of international good will instead of nationalistic hates. There is need of the spirit of Jesus in all human affairs. There is need of a new heart all around, on both sides of the conflict, among enemies and allies. The Christ was crucified afresh by the great armies in all the lands; and all the nations need to repent together for their colossal folly and their common sin. There is need of a new spirit of pity for all the mourners in all the lands. There is need of a spirit of forgiveness for all wrongs suffered, without which there can be no hope of forgiveness of sins committed.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SEVENTH BEATITUDE:
INDICTMENT OF THE CHURCH

THERE must be a new sense of human brotherhood, a new spirit of tolerance and humanity. There is only one source from which it can come, one hope of salvation for the sinning and the suffering and sorrowing world of to-day, and that is to be found at the feet of Jesus, who said, "Blessed are the pacifists: for they shall be called the sons of God." It is the business of the church to bring the world to the feet of Jesus. It never will be able to do it until it is ready itself to take its stand there. It has stood with the militarists through all the centuries. Nothing shows the difference between the spirit and the teaching of Jesus and the spirit and the teaching of the church more clearly than the age-long attitude of the church toward war.

1. *Inconsistency of the Church.* Nothing could be more inconsistent than the lust to kill and the love to save. Yet the whole history of the church has been one great evasion upon this subject. Usually it has been op-

posed to all war except the war on hand. It has preached against war as such, but blessed the war then being prosecuted. Sometimes it has boldly enrolled itself with the warmakers and has done its utmost to incite the masses to holy crusades against the infidel or the heretic or any unfortunate who opposed its politics or ambitions. Since the age of Constantine there never has been a period when the Christian clergy as a whole called an existing war a crime against civilization and religion and exerted themselves to prevent its possibility. On the contrary, it has blessed the standards of its own armies and has attempted again and again to propagate its faith by the force of arms.

(1) It has reviled Mohammedanism as a religion of the sword even while it was granting indulgence to all who would fight for it against such an aggressive foe. The armies of the cross have fought with the armies of the crescent, and the one army was as militaristic as the other. In the last war the church in every nation prayed for the blessing of God upon its own troops in dealing out death and destruction to the enemy. Catholic fought against Catholic and Protestant against Protestant, English Wesleyan against German Methodist, and in the pulpits at home the

preachers of the opposing nations were diligently praying that death might come to them all. The preachers were exhorting the soldiers in all the armies to give their own hearts to God and then shoot straight at the hearts of the enemies.

In every battle the ungodly soldiers were killing their fellow men, and the Christian soldiers were not only killing their fellow men but also their fellow Christians; and in all Christian cathedrals *Te Deums* were sung after every victory, which meant even if they did not say it in so many words,

“Ten thousand foemen gone below,
Praise God from whom all blessings flow!”

It was the London *Punch* which satirized the Kaiser's pious telegrams to his wife in the verse which became famous:

“By grace divine, my dear Augusta,
We've had another awful buster;
Ten thousand Frenchmen sent below!
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!”

If, as is barely possible, they were willing to admit that Christians, as honest and earnest as they themselves, but who were in the enemy ranks, went to heaven from the battlefield, then they must also have believed that men who were hating and mutilating and

killing each other a moment before death in just a few minutes later were standing before the throne of God in perfect peace and love together, holding hands and harmoniously singing to the praise of the Prince of Peace,

"Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

Possibly their theology of an intermediate state might mitigate the suddenness of the jar a little and give time for a less violent transition from murdering hate to brotherly love.

(2) It was anything but an edifying spectacle to the heathen peoples of the world. In the beginning it was said, "See how these Christians love one another"; but here at the end of the Christian centuries all the heathen were saying, "See how these Christians hate each other; they have forgotten all about their Christianity in their mutual and universal obsession of hate"; or they were saying with all reason, "If this is what Christianity means and nineteen centuries of Christian preaching has led only to this world debacle, then the less we know about Christianity the better." They were right in saying these things, and it will take decades or centuries to dispossess their minds of the conception of Christianity which the World War gave them.

It will be done only when the church has repented in sackcloth and ashes for her great betrayal of the Master in her subservience to the state and her loyalty to the nationality in which she happened to reside. She has sacrificed her loyalty to the Prince of Peace in order to bow down before the idol of the tribal God. When the various governments asked the church to join in their war propaganda and preach national patriotism instead of international brotherhood, practically all the ministers lent themselves to that program and they fulminated against the atrocities of their foes, and they asserted the righteousness of their own methods and aims until the lay membership was ready to enlist under the various opposing banners and go forth to injure and maim and kill their brothers.

Under the thousand of church spires in each of the warring lands professing Christians were praying that their representatives on the battlefields might be blessed of their God to tear their fellow Christians limb from limb and blow them to pieces, to sack their homes and ravage their lands, to orphan their children and starve their wives, to make a hell on earth to the glory of his great name.

The mockery of it and the madness of it is enough to make the very name of the Chris-

tian a stench in the nostrils of the world. How can anybody have any further faith in a church which has come to such abject servility to the chauvinistic and militaristic party in every land?

“’Tis shame on Christendom, with Christ’s good Word,
That man’s sole arbiter is still the sword.

“Two thousand years the world has known the truth,
Has preached of peace, and still prepared for strife,
Two thousand years of blasphemy forsooth,
That prates of Jesus, while it stabs his life!”

The battleships and standing armies, the military and naval expenditures, the national hatreds and distrusts are all outward and visible signs of the gigantic failure of Christianity to make real its gospel of love and peace. We can but sympathize with John Bright’s bitter cry: “Let us abandon our pretensions. While we adhere to heathen practices, let us no longer claim to be a Christian people. Take down at any rate the Ten Commandments from inside your churches; and say no longer that you read, or believe in, the Sermon on the Mount.” To be consistent and maintain its self-respect the church must either condemn war as unequivocally as it does drunkenness or unchastity or any other sin, or it must abandon altogether any pro-

fession of allegiance to Christian principles at this point.

(3) *Prayer for Success.* When the Austrian and the German and the English and the American preachers prayed all in their own place for "the success of our arms," they may have bamboozled their presumably pious flocks, but they did not fool the Infinite Father. They could not cheat God with their phrases. He knew that what they meant was: "Bless our bayonets to disembowel our enemies. Bless our bullets to blind our foes. Bless our bombs to blow them to pieces. Bless our cannon to cut off their legs and their arms. Bless our airplanes to scatter poison in their midst, and the submarines to send them to a watery grave. Bless our battleships to blockade their ports until their old people and their children are starved. Bless our soldiers to maim and murder and ravage and burn, until our enemies die in extremities of torture. That is what our armies are sent out to do, and now, O God, we pray for success for our arms." Were it not so tragic, so preposterously pathetic, He that sitteth in the heaven surely would laugh at such prayers.

Hall Caine wrote recently, "I am compelled to conclude that, according to the teaching of the Christian religion, it is not right to fight,

and that the spectacle of two Christian nations praying to the same God for success for their opposing armies, ringing their church bells to celebrate their victory or lament their defeat, singing on the one hand their *Te Deum* and on the other their *Miserere*, and all in the name of Him who said 'Resist not evil,' is a spectacle of deeper and crueller irony than anything else that civilization at this moment presents." That is the way it seems to a modern man of letters and that is the way it seems to any clear-thinking mind.

The angel of Sandalphon bore the prayers of the opposing hosts to heaven.

"With thee, with thee, Lord God of Sabaoth,
It rests to answer both.
Out of the obscene seas of slaughter hear,
From East and West, one prayer:
'O God, deliver thy people. Let thy sword
Destroy our enemies, Lord.'

Then, on the cross of his creative pain,
God bowed his head again.
Then, East and West, over all seas and lands,
Outstretched his piercéed hands.
Then down in hell they chuckled, 'West and East,
Each holds one hand at least.'

'And yet,' Sandalphon whispered, 'men deny
The Eternal Calvary.'"

2. *Jingoism in the Church.* When war was declared, practically all of our pulpits began

to preach patriotism rather than peace, and our churches were turned into recruiting stations for our armies, and our sermons were filled with the latest slogans of the press and the street and in many places the attempt was made to glorify war as strengthening the manhood and elevating the character and improving the health of the conscripted boys and the confused and hesitant nation. Some preachers would rather be in favor with men than with God. Some preachers would rather be popular, even if they have to preach the doctrines of devils instead of the truth of God. Some preachers will ride the prevalent hobby even if they have to get astride a cannon to do it. The church failed to raise any effective protest against their jingoism, and it stood branded in that Judgment Day as the mistress of militarism rather than the bride of Christ.

(1) *Its Gospel.* A gospel was being preached outside the church before the war which ran like this: "Ye have heard how in old time it was said, Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth; but I say unto you, Blessed are the valiant, for they shall make the earth their throne. And ye have heard men say, Blessed are the poor in spirit; but I say unto you, Blessed are the great in

soul and the free in spirit, for they shall enter into Valhalla. And ye have heard men say, Blessed are the peacemakers; but I say unto you, Blessed are the warmakers, for they shall be called, if not the children of Jahve, the children of Odin, who is greater than Jahve."

It was Nietzsche who declared: "Ye say it is a good cause which halloweth every war. I say unto you it is the good war that halloweth every cause. War has achieved more than was ever achieved by love of one's neighbor. . . . Not contentedness but power; not peace but war; not virtue but capacity—this is the rule of life. The weak shall perish, and the people shall help them to do it—this is the first principle of charity. What is the worst of crimes?—sympathy for the weak and unfortunate—Christianity!"

Bernhardi said, "War is a biological necessity of the first importance, a regulative element in the life of mankind which cannot be dispensed with." Treitschke declared, "It has always been the weary, spiritless, and exhausted ages which have played with the dream of perpetual peace." The gospel of these writers might have been summarized as "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth war, ill will toward men."

As soon as war was declared most of the

preachers seemed to espouse this new gospel in large measure, and in that measure to have become recreant to the preaching of the gospel of Jesus. We heard the gospel of hate preached by our bishops and the gospel of patriotism published by ecclesiastical assemblies, and there was the smell of powder in our prayer meetings and a suspicion of brimstone in our pulpits.

Archdeacon Wilberforce, preaching in Saint Margaret's Church, London, said, "To kill Germans is a divine service in the fullest acceptance of the term"; and on both sides of the conflict the preachers were saying,

"God's most perfect instrument
In working out a pure intent
Is man arrayed for mutual slaughter:
Yea, Carnage is His daughter."

The materialism and the imperialism and the militarism of international politics took possession of the so-called Christian people just as surely as of any other portion of the population and the Socialists and the pacifists were suppressed by the church as relentlessly as by the army and the navy. Adam Clarke declared, "War is as contrary to the spirit of Christianity as murder," and John Wesley said, "War is the business of hell; how shall Christians help the Prince of Hell, who was

a murderer from the beginning, by telling the world about the usefulness and necessity of war?" Many preachers seem to have had no trouble in doing it. If there ever was a foolish and unreasonable war it was the Crimean War. The conscience of the world has condemned it in its motives and its operation. It was in this war that the term "jingoism" came into common use, in connection with the jingle sung at that time,

"We don't want to fight, but by Jingo, if we do,
We've got the ships, we've got the men, we've got
the money too."

Yet Charles Kingsley gave it the religious sanction.

(2) *Representatives.* a. *Kingsley.* He wrote a tract which was circulated in great numbers among the fighting men. He called it *Brave Words to Brave Soldiers and Sailors*, and in it he said, "Some say as they read this: 'We have to fight and to kill; we want to be sure that God's blessing is on our fighting and our killing; we have to go into battle, and we want to know that then, too, we are doing God's work, and to be sure that God is on our side.'

"Well, my brave men, be sure of it! Be sure God's blessing is as much upon you; be

sure that you are doing God's work as much when you are handling a gun in your country's battles as when you are bearing frost and hunger in the trenches, and pain and weakness on a sick bed. For the Lord Jesus Christ is not only the Prince of Peace; he is the Prince of war too. He is the Lord of Hosts, the God of Armies; and whoever fights in a just war against tyrants and oppressors, he is fighting on Christ's side, and Christ is fighting on his side; Christ is his Captain and his Leader, and he can be in no better service. Be sure of it, for the Bible tells you so.

"You must think of the Lord Jesus Christ not merely . . . as the Man of Sorrows . . . but as the Lord of Hosts . . . the God to whom your colors were solemnly offered, and his blessing on them prayed for, when they were given to your regiment. . . . Remember too, that those colors are a sign to you that Christ is with *you* . . . never forget that your colors are a sign to you that Christ's blessing is on *you*. If they do not mean that to you, what was the use of blessing them with prayer? It would have been a lie and a sham. But it is no lie, brave men, and no sham; it is a glorious truth of which these glorious rags, inscribed with noble names of victory, should remind you

every day and every hour, that he who fights for Queen and country in a just cause is fighting not only in the Queen's army, but in Christ's army, and he shall in no wise lose his reward."

It is a good sample of the preaching we hear in every war. Our armies fight for justice and right, and therefore our armies are the armies of the Lord, and for us a war is a holy war. If Canon Kingsley had happened to be born in Russia, he might have been preaching similar blasphemies on the other side in the Crimean contest.

We heard them on both the German and the American side during the Great War. The preachers said explicitly, "War is contrary to the spirit and teaching of Jesus," and yet under the circumstances and for this one time only they thought all Christians ought to join heartily in this un-Christian work. Generally speaking, they were for peace; but in the then present conditions they were for war. If others repudiated the teachings of Christ and plunged into wicked war, they were ready to follow the unholy example and compound the iniquity.

The moment the church says that war is a sin and un-Christian and then begins to exhort Christians to get into this sinful and un-

Christian thing in order to put an end to it or in order to accomplish any righteous result, it occupies an absolutely inconsistent and untenable position and forfeits the respect of all reasoning and really religious men. It becomes like the Bellman of whom we read,

“He was thoughtful and grave—but the orders he gave
Were enough to bewilder a crew.

When he cried, “Steer to starboard, but keep her head
larboard!”

What on earth was the helmsman to do?”

b. Smith. Sir George Adam Smith came across the Atlantic during the last war to tell us, “Now is the time for all good Christians to carry the sword as well as the cross. . . . This is a battle of great ideas and motives. Our motives are pure and unselfish, and we must keep them so. We, and America, and Italy, and France, battle for justice and for righteousness. . . . Autocracy must go, and democracy must reign and rule.”

England, America, Italy, France—why did he not include Japan in his list? Japan was fighting with us. Therefore Japan must have been fighting for justice and righteousness and that autocracy might go and that democracy might reign and rule, too; and if so, it was a little mean in him not to mention Japan, our honorable ally. I suppose there is a limit to

the stultification to which even clerical militarism can go. I suppose Sir George hesitated a little in proclaiming Japan, one of the most autocratic governments of the world, as a champion of democracy.

He had no question about England with its hereditary monarchy and its hereditary House of Lords and its hereditary landed system, with its limited suffrage for one class and its multiple suffrage power for another, and with such social conditions that it is facing grimly toward a social revolution, England and the king of Italy and the king of Belgium and the king of Serbia and the king of Roumania and the emperor of India and the emperor of Japan were all joined with the two republics of America and France to thrust democracy down the unwilling throats of the peoples of the world with the bayonets of their Christian love and the cannon of their Christian consecration. There were some fools who believed that, although it must have taken an almost incredible amount of gullibility to suppose it even for an instant. Now that the war is over many of them are announcing their disillusionment; but they will forever be under the suspicion that when the next war comes they will be as capable of delusion as they were before.

c. Kingsley again. Charles Kingsley was sure that whatever England did was right. He would have justified the Amritsar massacre, even as he justified the doings of Rajah Brooke. He said, "The truest benevolence is occasional severity. It is expedient that one man die for the people; one tribe be exterminated, if need be, to save a whole continent. . . . Do you believe in the Old Testament? Surely; then, say, what does that destruction of the Canaanites mean? If it was right, Rajah Brooke was right. If he be wrong, then Moses, Joshua, David were wrong. No! I say. Because Christ's kingdom is a kingdom of peace; because the meek alone shall inherit the earth—therefore, you Malays and Dyaks of Sarawak, you also are enemies to peace . . . You are the enemies of Christ, the Prince of Peace; you are beasts, all the more dangerous because you have a semi-human cunning.

"I will, like David, 'hate you with a perfect hatred, even as though you were *my* enemies.' I will blast you out with grape and rockets; 'I will beat you as small as the dust before the wind.' You, 'the strange people that dissemble before me, shall fail,' and be exterminated, and be afraid, out of your infernal river-forts, as the old Canaanites were out of

their hill-castles.”¹ Here is the gospel with a vengeance, a gospel of extermination at the point of the sword, with all the horrors of mutilation and murder, for all who dare to oppose themselves to us who have chosen to proclaim ourselves the chosen of the Lord of Hosts.

Canon Newbolt blandly tells us, “War is a hard teacher of grand virtues,” and H. Fielding Hall goes a step further and says: “War is the purifier of the spirit. . . . War, internal or external, is the only escape from slavery, from the slavery of castes, religions, ideas which degrade and terrify, from cowardice physical and spiritual, from apathy, from that dry rot into which nations fall. No great awakening has ever come except by war. It is the great stimulant, spiritual and physical.”

The absolute negation of the truth could not be expressed more clearly than in these words. We would need to substitute “the Holy Spirit” for the word “war” in those statements to make them true. War is the negation of the spirit of Jesus and the spirit of God. One must repudiate the teaching of Jesus in order to justify war. This is clearly recognized by an eminent Anglican scholar

¹Kingsley's *Memoirs*, vol. i, 340-1.

and priest and militarist when he says, "A great deal of the teaching of Jesus was a polemic against the war party. That teaching was a desirable teaching for the Jews of that period. I do not think it a desirable teaching for a great nation. He remains the leader of his own time and not the permanent leader of this."

d. Didon. Père Didon made an address to the sons of the French aristocrats in school in Paris and he said, "France fosters and cherishes her army as a sacred treasure; she worships it, and her anger would be terrible, her reprisals bloody against the sacrilegious men who would dare to attack it. Notwithstanding the intellectualism which professes to disdain force; notwithstanding the excesses of a mad liberty, which is restive under and revolts against force; notwithstanding that cosmopolitanism which has mistaken the law of humanity, namely, that Providence and the nature itself of things have grouped men in distinct nations; notwithstanding all sophisms, the aberrations of ill-balanced minds—France wishes her army, she wishes it strong, invincible, and she places it in her dearest, highest hopes. We consider it a sacred duty, gentlemen, of our profession as educators, to keep alive in the soul of the French youth the

military spirit, the cult of the national army and of holy force.”

If you do not believe as we do, then by holy force we will beat your brains out until you do. If you do not think as we think you ought, then by holy force we will deprive you of legs and arms and homes and lands until you are converted to our views. This is the doctrine of the holy Father Didon, and it is the doctrine which was preached in numberless sermons during the Great War. Holy force would make all things right in this present evil world. Holy force would convince all men of the truth and bring them to see and love the good and the right and usher in the kingdom of God on this earth. If anybody were so wicked as to differ with us and to believe that he had as much truth as we had, and that he loved the good as much as we did, and that he was just as much in the right as we were, then, if he were as ready to fight for his convictions as we were, by holy force we would send him down quick into hell.

That was the doctrine preached in most of our pulpits during the war. We were all right and our enemies were all wrong, and the best way to set them right was to show them that we had more guns and more money and more men than they had, and that might made

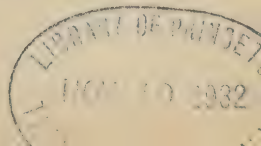
right, and, as Hegel said, "the victorious nation is always the better nation." Most of our preachers seemed to think that war was an instrument of righteousness and the sword was the best implement for propagating the truth, and that airplanes and submarines and warships would regenerate the race, and armies and navies in the great war to end war would be the harbingers of the coming of the Prince of Peace. Most of them know better now. They know that the war did not end in peace but in pieces. They know that there is more hatred in the world to-day than ever before in all its history. They know that the coming of the Kingdom is indefinitely postponed. They talk now about being disillusioned; and if that means anything, it means that they were awful fools in war time. Then they were ready to agree with Roosevelt, who said, "By war alone can men acquire those virile qualities necessary to win in the stern strife of actual life."

e. De Maistre. Then they seemed to agree with Joseph de Maistre, who said: "War is divine. It is divine in itself because it is a law of the world. War is divine in the mysterious glory which surrounds it, and in the not less inexplicable attraction which draws us to it. War is divine in the protection

granted to great captains, even the most daring, who are rarely hit in battles and only when their fame can no longer be increased and their mission is finished. War is divine in the manner in which it breaks out. How much are those who are thought to be the authors of war drawn into the circumstances! War is divine in its results, which absolutely elude the speculations of men."

Hands off this divine institution! If any Socialist like Eugene Debs interferes with the conscription of soldiers for the holy war, let him be silenced at once and let him be imprisoned for years. If any pacifist dares to suggest that the church is bowed down in the temple of Rimmon, or is worshiping before the image of Baal, or in its advocacy of militarism is putting its dependence upon pure materialism, away with him, crucify him, off with his head, throw him to the dogs! The war is sacrosanct, the soldiers are martyrs; they are laying down their lives for others, even as Christ did on the cross. These were the blasphemies to which we had to listen on Sundays and on weekdays during the war.

3. *Wartime Blasphemies.* Martyrs are not murderers. A martyr is not a man who goes out hunting for his brother in order to kill him and who does kill him, unless he is so



unfortunate as to be killed by him first. Unresisting victims like Jesus get martyred sometimes. He believed that it was better to sacrifice his life as a martyr than to save it as a murderer. He believed that it was better to suffer than to sin. For two centuries Christians were martyrs, preferring torture and death to the crime of bearing arms and going out to kill their brother men. It was only after the first great apostasy in the days of Constantine that the church began to think that although Jesus absolutely forbade the killing of men, if you only put a man into uniform it would be all right for him to kill as many men as he could; and in the late war the church came to the pass in which it proclaimed the greatest murderer as the greatest hero and every man who would be a murderer whether he ever attained his object or not as a martyr comparable to the Christ of Calvary.

We were told during the Great War that the soldiers were filling up the lack in the sufferings of Christ, and that they were finishing his work of world-redemption, and that every soldier slain in battle went straight to heaven. Mohammed had said it: "Whosoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven; at the Day of Judgment his wounds shall be resplen-

dent as vermilion and odorous as musk, and the loss of limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and seraphim." It would be a little difficult to find a passage paralleling that in our New Testament, but many of our pulpits supplied the lack in their preaching.

(1) *Mercier*. Cardinal Mercier in Belgium said: "If I am asked what I think of the eternal salvation of a brave man who has conscientiously given his life in defense of his country's honor and in vindication of violated justice, I shall not hesitate to reply that without any doubt whatever Christ crowns his military valor, and that death accepted in this spirit assures the safety of the man's soul." Possibly the word "conscientiously" saves the Cardinal from sheer blasphemy and the utter heresy of preaching salvation by works, the soldiers saving themselves by their sacrifice in battle.

(2) *Abbott*. Lyman Abbott was not so careful when he said without any qualifying terms: "We may be sure that whatever their faults or their transgressions here the righteous Father will not refuse those heroic cross-bearers the crown of righteousness." That must mean that the unbelieving and unrepentant soldier who died cursing and hating, and who had his pockets full of obscene pictures,

went straight to his coronation, needing no atonement in his behalf but having earned eternal bliss in his conscript army service in killing other sinful men.

Bishop Moule, of Durham, was one of the Keswick leaders and one of the recognized scholars and saints of the English Church. With the most of his brethren ecclesiastics, he went headlong into the patriotism and the jingoism which supported the militarism of the late war; but with all his abandon of loyalty to his nation's cause he felt constrained as a New Testament theologian to file a disclaimer at this point of blasphemy proclaimed in some pulpits. He said: "Strange thoughts are in the air, even in Christian circles, very far away from the gospel of the apostles. We must all have come across, in the course of the war, a set of opinion which makes the courageous soldier the spiritual equivalent of the saint; which makes it, to put it crudely, at least the highest probability that the man who shed his blood for his country would go to heaven with his robes washed in the blood of himself—the doctrine of salvation by service, irrespective of a man's attitude toward God, or his sense of sin, or the glory of his crucified Saviour, or the necessity of his presence and power at every turn." The Bishop

could not stand for that. It seemed to him both heresy and blasphemy.

Abbé Loisy was excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church, but he was a clear-sighted exegete who saw the absolute inconsistency between the militaristic fulminations of the pulpits during the war time and the teachings of Jesus. He said: "As for finding in the gospel a philosophy of war—that is a thing we need not trouble about. Mohammed is the only authority, and to import his views would not help us." He ridiculed those under whose preaching "a Christ of an ideal more than pacifist becomes a Deity of blood, a leader of exterminations, a heavenly chief of National armies—Jesus Sabaoth." He said, "The links between this *religion militaire* and the gospel of Jesus are not only weak but they are nonexistent."

Do we hear it said that the church has lost its leadership to-day? It deserves to lose that leadership when it utterly betrays its leader Jesus. Will it ever recover its influence and its spiritual power? Not until it comes back to the teaching of Jesus, who said, "Blessed are the pacifists, for they shall be called the sons of God." In 1918 Washington Gladden said: "If after the war the church keeps on with the same old religion, there will be the

same old hell on earth that religious leaders have been preparing for centuries, the full fruit of which we are gathering now. The church must cease to sanction those principles of militaristic and atheistic nationalism by which the rulers of the earth have so long kept the world at war."

We do not see much indication yet that pacifism is coming into favor. For economy's sake we are to reduce our armaments, to save the world from universal bankruptcy; but we are to keep enough on hand to make another war possible at any moment. People are talking as confidently about the certainty of the next war now as they ever did about the last one before 1914. To most minds still the internationalist is looked upon with suspicion and the pacifist is unquestionably a traitor. The church has not yet seen that it is incongruous to send handfuls of Christian missionaries out to save the heathen from dying without the knowledge of God and at the same time to send millions of soldiers out to kill fellow-mortals in their sins on the battlefield, to sacrifice money and men to save a few while at the same time it is sacrificing more money and more men to destroy a thousand times more than the missionaries can hope to reach. If it were not so tragic, it surely would seem

like the height of the ridiculous to any sober mind.

Charles Sumner once said: "The dark ages have not passed away; Erebus, and black night born of Chaos, still brood over the earth; nor can we hail the clear day until the hearts of nations are touched as the hearts of individual men, and all acknowledge the same law of right. . . . The injunction, 'Love one another,' is as applicable to nations as to individuals. It is one of the great laws of heaven; and nations, like individuals, may measure their nearness to God by the conformity of their conduct to this duty." If this is the measure, we are still far removed; Erebus and black night still brood over the earth. There are no Christian nations as long as all nations arm for mutual slaughter and are selfishly materialistic and agree in decrying and denying the idealism of Christ. The church is not a Christian Church as long as it prefers a blustering and aggressive patriotism to righteousness and peace and refuses to curse war as the greatest crime against civilization and religion which sane or insane men can commit.

4. *Condemnation of the Church.* (1) *Infi-del.* What did the Truth-Seeker, the organ of free-thinkers, say? "If the church is im-

potent to hold back the great Christian nations from this crime of crimes, she is worthless as a moral agency." That is a sweeping indictment and a somewhat surprising one from such a source.

(2) *Jewish*. A Jewish publication agreed with that of the free-thinkers; and The American Hebrew, in an article on "The Failure of Christianity," said: "The church has failed. . . . Throughout the centuries Christianity has spoken of peace, but nowhere in Christian teachings have there been found effective examples of the peace spirit since the death of its great Founder. As an institution it has been the right hand of war, ministering words of comfort to the dying soldier, but never standing firmly for the ideals of peace in moments of crisis. . . . To this day advocates of Christianity, members in high standing in their organizations, speak of armament as a prelude to peace, and whenever it comes to a decision they stand shoulder to shoulder with the cohorts of force." It then cited Roosevelt, the Apostle of the Big Stick, as an example of the type it had in mind.

(3) *Catholic*. The Roman Catholic organ, America, declared that Mammon, and not Christ, was worshiped in the war. "Mammon

must be served once again, adored by the sacrifice of thousands of human lives, propitiated by the wails of women and the tears of children. The conquering nation will emerge from the war all dripping with blood. It will wash itself clean and pile the gold heavenward. Throughout the world preachers will point a finger of one hand at the glittering mass coined from man's life-blood, and lifting their voices will shout: 'Behold what the unadulterated Bible, the pure Gospel, has done for this nation!' A finger of the other hand will be directed to the conquered, despoiled nation, and men will be warned against a religion which has left its adherents in such misery. God awaits his day. The cannon will not roar forever, the drum will not sound for long. The mocking of Christ's spirit will cease. And then? The Judgment." It is a rhetorical paragraph but it clearly sets forth the position that war is anti-Christian in spirit.

(4) *Protestant Episcopal*. The Churchman, an organ of the Protestant Episcopal church, thought that the church attitude through the Great War was hypocritical. It said, "The Christian sees millions of other Christians banded together to practice open violation of the very foundation of Christian-

ity, to let loose murder, theft, lust, and all the baser possibilities of human nature upon people with whom they have no possible cause of personal quarrel. At the same time kings and emperors—Christian princes, be it noted, all of them—are urging their people on to commit these wanton acts in the name of the God whom they worship.” Another Protestant Episcopal publication, *The Living Church*, said: “Christians are fighting with Christians; Christian nations with Christian nations. Yet all of them know that war is not the Christian way by which disputes may be settled. . . . And the pity of it, the Christians have led non-Christian Japan into an un-Christian war, when we have been trying to make her a Christian nation!”

(5) *Congregationalist*. The Congregationalist joins in this chorus of the Christian disapproval of war. “Surely the heathen will laugh and the Mohammedans mock with derision as they witness the great exalted nations of Europe, nations whose name and fame have gone to the ends of the earth for their education, their progress in science, in the arts, in civilization and in Christianity, now slashing at each other’s throats. . . . How will the missionaries reply to the man of the East who seeks further evidence that belief in

Christ is more humanizing, more civilizing than Islam, or Hinduism, or Buddhism? By what arguments can they prove that the so-called Christian nation is more certain to keep a sacred pact, solemnly entered into, than a so-called pagan nation? The war is putting a burden upon the Christian missionaries throughout the world harder to bear than all the fanatical opposition and persecution, all the conflict with riotous disease, all the hatred engendered of innate sin."

(6) *Presbyterian*. The Continent, published by the Presbyterian Church, declared that, "If only there had been enough Christianity in the world, no man, prince, potentate or private citizen, could have hated or envied or overreached or dreaded his neighbors enough to bring war to pass. . . . The Church of Jesus Christ never yet has put forth all of its might in one consummate and consuming endeavor to abolish war from the world. . . . Surely, at the brink of a rising lake of blood whose tide already laps the foundations of civilization, every really Christian heart must feel put to shame."

Free-thinker and Jew, Roman Catholic and Protestant seem to agree that the church has fallen short of the ideal set before it by the Master which it professes to follow, and has

failed to be Christian in the hour of trial. It needs to repent, and to say with Wolsey,

“Had I but served my God with half the zeal
I served my king, he would not in mine age
Have left me naked to mine enemies.”

The church has pretended to represent the Prince of Peace, but it has rallied to the support of militarism. It has tried to deceive its membership into believing that good could come out of evil and that war would lead to democracy and peace and all things necessary to establish the kingdom of God among men; and in so doing it has repudiated the example and the teaching of Jesus.

CHAPTER IX

THE SEVENTH BEATITUDE:
JESUS AND WAR

I. WAR PROMISES. 1. *End of War.* We talked about the moral glories and gains of war until we almost persuaded ourselves that there were such things. Some of the preachers were liars and some were simply fools; but they told us that this war would end war, and now we know that that promise, as Sir Philip Gibbs says, "simply mocks at us with jeering laughter." Lord Balfour said that every British and French soldier would leave the trenches in twenty-four hours, if he did not believe that he was fighting to kill war; but now that the war is over, Premier Nitti, of Italy, tells us: "While the war was still going on, people said this would be the last war, but Germany's militarist spirit has been acquired by the peoples who overthrew Germany. . . . I do not know if there is peace anywhere in the world, but there certainly is none in Europe."

2. *End of Militarism.* We were told that the war would dethrone militarism, but it es-

tablished a militarism in France and in America that was more expensive and aggressive than Prussia ever saw in her palmiest days. Ninety-three per cent of our taxes in the United States go for war purposes, and there are larger armies in all the lands than there ever were before. If, as the preachers told us, this was a war to end war, it is the most colossal failure known to history. It has fostered militarism, instead of abolishing it, and all the soldiers who fought ostensibly to end the horrible thing know now that they were fooled into prolonging and strengthening its life.

3. *World Safe for Democracy.* The preachers told us that the Great War was a war to make the world safe for democracy. Can violence safeguard democracy? There have been those who thought that the cause of democracy could be served by the assassin's bullet and the anarchist's bomb, and most people have thought that such folks were deluded or insane. War is that delusion or insanity displayed on a colossal scale. If the great World War was a war to make the world safe for democracy, it has ignominiously failed. The world never was so unsafe for democracy at home and abroad. As Jerome K. Jerome phrased it, "Wilson's oft-repeated assertion

that America entered the war to make the world 'safe for democracy' should rightly be interpreted 'safe from democracy,' since the iron heel of militarism is set down firmly wherever democracy dares to lift its head." Freedom of thought and freedom of speech, the freedom of the press and freedom of assembly have not yet regained the ground lost in the time of the war.

For months and for years we were told what we must think and what we must say, and the dictators of our opinions and our actions were not conspicuously intellectual or moral; they were simply the heads of our departments of government and our military authorities and our policemen. In their eyes to be a pacifist was to be a traitor. Therefore pacifists were not allowed to think or to speak their pacifism. There was freedom of speech and thought only for those who agreed with the ruling powers that war was the one business on hand and it was no time for a man to listen to his conscience or his reason or to preach a gospel of peace. The jingoists had the right of way in the pulpit and elsewhere.

4. *Rights of Weak Nations.* They told us that the war would establish the rights of the weak and the oppressed and give self-determination to all the small nations; but all

around the world to-day the weak and the oppressed nations are complaining that their rights are ignored and that that promise has not been made good and that it was only another gigantic lie.

5. *Toning Up Religiously.* The jingoist preachers told us that the spiritual fiber of the people was degenerate, but war would tone us up, discipline us, give us new and noble conceptions of brotherhood and self-sacrifice; and we would come out of it morally enriched. Now we know that the war taught us to rely upon force rather than upon reason and to follow the leadings of passion rather than the dictates of justice. We know that the war has weakened individuality and coarsened the moral fiber. We know that it made virtues of murder and arson and theft, and we have had a great harvest of crime as a natural result in every land. We know that the general mass of the people is more immoral, more vulgar, more profane since the war than it ever was before. Instead of being toned up spiritually and seeing a great revival of faith, as we were promised, we have been schooled into cruelty and licentiousness, and the nations have become cynical and demoralized as they never were before the war.

6. *A Clean Peace.* We were promised that

the peace would be a clean peace, a righteous peace, a just piece, a peace of reconciliation. Jerome K. Jerome in expressing his disillusionment at all of these points said: "I am learning now what a 'righteous peace' means! It means that when you have your enemy down, the more you jump on him, the more righteous you feel. I am learning what a 'just' peace means. It means that when you have your enemy bound hand and foot, the allies try to be 'just' to one another in dividing the booty. I am learning what a 'clean' peace means. It means a Europe in which there are no more 'dirty Germans'; we are cleaning them out of Europe by starving them, which is the cleanest and cheapest way. I am learning what a peace of reconciliation means. It means that when you have persuaded your enemy to lay down his arms, on certain terms, and on condition of the fulfillment of certain pledges, you then proceed to break every one of these pledges, and leave him to reconcile himself to his own folly in believing that you had any honor." The peace treaties have given the lie to all the fourteen points or pledges which preceded them.

McCutcheon had a double cartoon which suggests the plain truth of the present situation. One half represented the war period,

with Religion and Selfishness, Patriotism and Lawlessness, Idealism and Greed, Self-Sacrifice and War feasting together at one table, sitting down together as boon brothers in peace and love. In the other half of the cartoon War and Religion and Idealism and Self-sacrifice are absent. Patriotism sits despondent, while Selfishness and Greed and Lawlessness are still gormandizing and have the contents of the table all to themselves. Where is the moral uplift we were promised as a result of the war? If the war is an elevator, it is an elevator always going down. Such an elevator is a complete failure when it comes to uplifting.

We all know that the war has demoralized and brutalized myriads of men. It has destroyed and annihilated billions of wealth. It has retarded civilization, possibly by thousands of years. It has postponed the regeneration of the race, possibly by some millenniums. The folly and futility of war ought to be apparent now to even the most ardent jingoists. The world ought to be ready to turn from all blind leaders of the blind who forget the gospel of peace to preach the glory of war and to listen now to the young Evangelist who stood in the morning light on the mountain-side and said, "Blessed are the peacemakers:

for they shall be called the sons of God." It ought to be ready to pray,

"For heathen heart that puts her trust
 In reeking tube and iron shard—
 All valiant dust that builds on dust,
 And guarding calls not thee to guard—
 For frantic boast and foolish word,
 Thy mercy on thy people, Lord!"

II. JESUS A PACIFIST. Jesus was a peacemaker, a pacifist. He deliberately determined that he would be a pacifist at any cost. In the wilderness temptation at the beginning of his career he faced the possibility of world conquest by the methods of militarism and definitely decided that such a conquest was not for him. It would be possible, but it would not be right.

What good he might have been able to accomplish, if he had climbed to the throne of world-empire and made the law of God the law of all men! "Had not Alexander the Great founded a world-empire and spread the Greek culture wherever his victorious armies came? Would it not be possible to spread the Jewish faith in the same way? The heathen abominations could be done away, the cruelties and oppressions of the nations could be abolished, the captives could be released, the bruised could be set at liberty, and the abuses

of the poor could be brought to an end. There would be no limit to the possibilities of good opened to Jesus if he once attained to the throne of the world.

“He would be the most benevolent Emperor of whom the mind of man could conceive. With the ideal Ruler the world might be made into the ideal kingdom of God. Was it only a dream impossible to realize? Jesus declared it one of the real temptations of the wilderness, and possibly it was the greatest temptation he had to encounter in life.

“Judas Maccabæus had won great victories with only a handful of men. God had been with them, the records said; and they added that the God of Heaven could deliver with a great multitude or with a small company, for no one who trusted in him ever failed in strength. If that were true, then nothing would be impossible to the faith of Jesus. He was the Prince and Perfecter of the faith which Judas and all the ancient worthies of Israel had shown. What they had accomplished was only a faint suggestion of what he could accomplish along the same lines.

“Had they subdued kingdoms, waxed mighty in war, and turned to flight armies of aliens? Then Jesus, with his faith in the Father, could put to flight all his foes and

become a world Conqueror and establish himself at the head of the universal empire of mankind. The people were looking for a leader like Judas Maccabæus, a temporal monarch who would lead their armies and win their liberties and make them the masters of the world. Would Jesus answer to that expectation and be the leader they desired?

“With a little compromise of principle and a little pulling of wires it could be done, and he could have all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them for his reward. Would he be a leader of that kind? Would he win his Kingdom by force? Would he spread his faith by the aid of the sword? Would he fight like Judas and make a great slaughter of his enemies and so obtain peace for the world? At the very beginning of his ministry Jesus faced these questions and decided that the method of Judas could not be his method. That method had failed so lamentably in the long run. No kingdom won by the sword had stood for any great length of time. His kingdom must be world-wide and eternal.”¹

Such a kingdom never could be founded upon fields drenched in blood and desolated cities and homes. Such a kingdom never

¹Hayes, *Great Characters of the New Testament*, pp. 25-27.

would be satisfied with making the knees to bow and leaving the hearts untouched. He would not establish another in that long succession of Oriental despotisms of which the pages of history were full. He would be a preacher, a teacher, a pacifist by preference.

He had warrior blood in his veins and he had the example of the Maccabæan princes in mind. He had been reared in a pious home where the Old Testament Scriptures were revered and read and he knew all about the wars of Israel and the glorious victories his people had achieved in faithfulness to their God. It was a real temptation to him to be a new Joshua or David or Judas Maccabæus and in military conquest to free his people from political bondage and to restore the spiritual worship of the Lord of Hosts. He decided it could not be done in that way.

He would not have the kingdoms of the world if they had to be won by methods of violence and force. He would have them only if they were drawn to him and held to him by bonds of love. He would not bow the knee to the devil by adopting a military program. He would prefer to be a pacifist even if it would lead him to the cross. He had constant temptation along that line through all his ministry. He lived in a world organized on the

basis of military force. The Messianic expectation of his people was that of dominion by military power. He lived and moved in an atmosphere of militarism.

There were three parties among his fellow countrymen. The Pharisees preached patience in the assured hope that God would speedily avenge them of their enemies. They endured in faith in a divine intervention in due time. The Hellenists were the advocates of compromise, ready to come to an understanding with their enemies and so be at peace. The Zealots were the fanatics, ready for revolution and war at once, unwilling to be patient any longer or to compromise at any point.

They were all of them patriots, laboring in the way which seemed to them best for their country's good. Jesus refused to ally himself with the patriots of any one of these parties. He would not pray for speedy vengeance upon the nation's foes. He showed no inclination to compromise with them. He absolutely refused to resort to force of arms. He seemed to all these parties to be unpatriotic. Neither the people nor his apostles could understand or appreciate his pacifism.

His pacifism rooted itself in his loyalty to God, the God of peace. He believed that individual and selfish interests had to be sub-

ordinated to home and family interests sometimes. These family interests had to be subordinated to national interests sometimes. Patriotic and national interests had to be subordinated to world interests sometimes. With him everything must be subordinated to the will of God all the time. His followers will abide by his example and when the claims of patriotism and the claims of religion conflict, their supreme loyalty will be given to their Lord. With them as with him the Kingdom of God and its righteousness must come first in war time and all the time. They will obey God rather than the conscription laws of unrighteous men, when that issue is forced upon them.

The mob on one occasion would have taken Jesus by force to make him a military king. One of his disciples, Simon the Zealot, belonged to the party of revolutionary tendencies and insurrectionary history. John and James were of a spirit which would take swift vengeance upon their foes. In the Garden of Gethsemane Peter drew his sword to defend his Master from capture and insult and injury. Jesus had to curb the fiery spirit of Simon the Zealot and to rebuke the vengeful spirit of John and James and to command Peter to put up his sword into its sheath.

We are told with all gravity that Jesus commanded his disciples toward the end of his ministry to sell their cloaks and buy swords and in that way he set his seal of approval upon military preparedness and the use of the sword in war. If that be true, why did he tell Peter to put up his sword when Peter was ready to take the first opportunity to use it? If that be true, why did not his disciples afterward resort to the use of the sword to protect themselves and to establish their cause?

It never occurred to them to sell their coats and buy swords and become military revolutionists against the Roman Empire. They captured that empire by their preaching and their suffering, by their righteous lives and their heroic deaths. They never could have captured it by fighting and killing. Is it not strange that they unanimously ignored this command of the Master to become militaristic if that is what he meant to say to them? They knew he meant nothing of that sort.

They knew that the whole testimony of his teaching and his life and his death was against any such conclusion. They knew that they were faithful to him when they won their world victory, not by battle and bloodshed, but by faith and love and prayer. Professor Kirsopp Lake surely is right when he

says: "Much of the teaching of Jesus becomes intelligible only when we place it in contrast to the Zealots. He demanded that men should believe that the Kingdom would come, not because of their fighting, but because of their sufferings. 'In your suffering—your patient endurance—shall you win your lives;' 'he that suffers to the end shall be saved;' 'resist not evil,' and similar passages seem to be directed against the exactly opposite Zealot teaching."

— Before Pilate Jesus said: "If my disciples were of this world, then would they fight.² If my kingdom were of this world, then it might use worldly methods for its inauguration and its maintenance; but it is a kingdom of truth and truth never can be established in the hearts of men by force of arms." On the way to Calvary the temptation came again, to call upon God for twelve legions of angels to sweep his enemies off the face of the earth; but he steadfastly resisted all temptation to resort to violence and force. He persisted in his pacifism, although it became apparent in the end that to do so would be to die before his work seemed to be fairly begun. He would rather die as the Prince of Peace than to live as a World Conqueror by means of war.

²John 18. 36.

He would have peace at any price—to himself. Let it cost what it would, he would pay without flinching. He would rather be a would rather be crucified than to be a war-peacemaker and be called the Son of God. He maker for any reward that war could by any possibility bring. He would rather be accused of a lack of patriotism than to be disloyal to the revealed program of the God of peace. His gospel could not and must not win its victories by force of arms.

James Moffatt interprets his teaching to mean that his disciples were to “suffer patiently and passively. Neither hot word nor quick blow was to defend his faith. Like the great prototype of their Leader, who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, his followers were to let their throats be cut, unresisting sheep as they were, butchered by the cruel knife.” When the Romans besieged Jerusalem the Christians withdrew to Pella. They abandoned their nation and its capital to their fate. They must have been berated by the Zealots and despised by the Pharisees, but under these extremely trying circumstances they steadfastly refused to defend themselves against persecution or to use force or violence to establish or maintain what seemed to them their rights.

In assuming this attitude they knew themselves to be true to the teachings of Jesus, for "under no circumstances did he contemplate any active measures on the part of his disciples as patriots or as attacked persons." They knew that he had staked everything on the victory of sheer love. They knew that to be loyal to him they never must resort to force.

III. APOSTATE CHRISTIANITY. For three centuries the Christians followed the example of their Master and in those three centuries they captured the Roman Empire and had made a fair beginning of the conquest of the entire world for their king. Then Constantine camouflaged his imperialism with a profession of piety and raised the cross on which the Prince of Peace had died to be the standard of his victorious armies, and the Christian Church began to find it difficult to distinguish between the cross of Constantine and the cross of Jesus. Most of the Christians came to the conclusion that they were one and the same and that they could give allegiance to the cross of Jesus while serving the cross of Constantine and reaping its rich rewards in imperial favor and imperial power.

The conquering Christianity of the first three centuries became the worldly and compromising, the fighting and distracted Chris-

tianity of the later centuries and of the present day. It tried to claim and maintain its sovereignty by a union of the temporal and the spiritual power. It tried to be the mistress of this world and at the same time the bride of heaven. It blessed the crusades. It cursed the heretics. It persecuted and devastated and murdered and maimed, to the glory of God and the blessing of man. It hurled anathemas instead of scattering beatitudes. It forgot the Sermon on the Mount in its zeal to punish all who differed with it.

It has desired neither poverty of spirit nor purity of heart. It has despised the one and ridiculed the other. It has desired the wealth necessary to carry on its manifold and enormous enterprises and it has courted the kings of finance in order to get it. It has preferred a good standing among the patriots and the war-makers (two terms which too often have been considered synonymous) rather than to lose caste by being pacifist. In consequence, it has brought about a divided and distracted Christendom, with but a tithe of the influence it ought to have and would have if it returned to the simple faith of the first centuries and to reliance only upon the power of the spirit in the doing of the will of God.

To attempt to advance the interest of God's

kingdom by the use of military force is the very negation of the gospel of Jesus; but the church does not believe it as yet. If there should be a war with Mexico, the American church would convince itself that it would be for the good of the Mexicans that our civilization and our religion should be forced upon them and that it was the duty of all Christians to go down there and help our righteous government to institute a better order of things south of the Rio Grande. If we had a war with Japan, how clear it would be to most American Christians that here was a holy war against a heathen nation and that no patriot could hesitate to enlist in a struggle destined to add another empire to the dominion of the church.

This is the state of Christendom to-day, in spite of all the disillusionment of the Great War, in spite of all the lessons of past history, in spite of the clear teaching of Jesus in the beatitudes and in the whole of this great sermon. There will be no hope of a permanently better world until Christendom repents its agelong folly and is converted to the saner, wiser policy of Jesus and does its first works over again; and in consistent and persistent pacifism wins the world to righteousness and peace.

It was in that way that its first victories were won, by argument and persuasion, by reason and love, by the proclamation of the truth and the power of a holy life. It was only when the church began to rely upon force and coercion, imperial patronage and worldly promotion, things more or less tainted with doubtful connections and more or less incompatible with the truth, that it gained in popularity among the ruling classes as it lost in spiritual power.

In his *Life of Jesus*, Oscar Holtzmann has formulated the inevitable conclusion of all clear-thinking men when he says: "That ecclesiastical community will, we cannot doubt, be able to claim a pre-eminence over all others which guides its members nearest to a historical understanding of primitive Christianity, with a view of renewing within itself the primitive Christian ideal of life." Everybody knows that that ideal was not war, but peace.

1. *Exceptions.* There have been those in every period of the church who were true to the teachings of Jesus and who have borne their testimony faithfully in the midst of their own perverse generation, but they have been a mere remnant and never in control of the church since the days of Constantine. They have kept the flame of truth alive and have

passed it on from hand to hand, in the confident faith that the time would come when the will of God would be done on earth even as it is done in the peaceful heaven.

(1) *Lully*. In the darkest period of the Middle Ages, when the cross and the sword were in their most complete alliance with each other, and when all Christendom, under the fiery preaching of Peter the Hermit and Bernard of Clairvaux and other fanatics and saints, was being incited to repeated crusades under the patronage of the Popes for the wresting of the Holy Land from the power of the infidel by the use of carnal weapons blessed by the church, that famous scholar and devoted missionary Raymond Lully declared that the only way to spread the gospel was by the Christian method of persuasion, according to the example of Jesus. He said: "I see many knights going to the Holy Land, in the expectation of conquering it by force of arms; but instead of accomplishing their object they are in the end all swept off themselves; therefore, O Christ, it is my belief that the conquest of the Holy Land should be attempted in no other way than as thou and thy apostles undertook to accomplish it—by love, and prayer, by tears, and the offering up of their own lives. As it seems that the possession of

the Holy Sepulcher and of the Holy Land can be better secured by the force of preaching than the force of arms, therefore, let the missionaries march forth, as holy knights, glittering with the sign of the cross, replenished with the grace of the Holy Spirit, and proclaim to the infidels the truth of thy passion; let them from love to thee exhaust the whole fountain of their eyes, and pour out all the blood of their bodies, as thou hast done from love to them."

Can anyone doubt who came nearer to the spirit of Jesus, the missionary monk Raymond Lully or the crusading monks Bernard and Peter? If the money and the men sent into Palestine in the crusades had gone armed only with the gospel of love and of peace, would not Palestine have been in the hands of the Christians ever since?

(2) *Erasmus*. Erasmus was an apostle of peace, even after Luther became an advocate of war. Erasmus said: "If there be anything in the affairs of mortals which it is in the interests of men not only to attack but which ought by every possible means to be avoided, condemned, and abolished, it is of all things war, than which nothing is more impious, more calamitous, more widely pernicious, more inveterate, more base, or in sum more

unworthy of a man, not to say of a Christian. . . . They who defend war must defend the dispositions leading to war, and these dispositions are absolutely forbidden by the gospel. . . . Since the time that Jesus said, 'Put up thy sword into its scabbard' (Matthew 26. 22), Christians ought not to go to war. Christ suffered Peter to fall into an error in this, so that when he put up Peter's sword he might not remain any longer in doubt that war was prohibited." Erasmus said these things while Luther was cursing the peasants and urging the nobles to exterminate them with the sword, and can anyone doubt the superiority of Erasmus to Luther both as an interpreter of the New Testament and as a Christian at this point?

(3) *Wycliffe*. John Wycliffe was of like mind. He wrote: "Men say that Christ bade his disciples sell their coats, and buy them swords. But Christ taught not his disciples to fight with the sword of iron, but with the sword of God's word, which standeth in meekness of heart and in the prudence of man's tongue."

(4) *Garrettson*. During the Revolutionary War "some of the Methodists were bound in conscience not to fight; and no threatening could compel them to bear arms or hire a man

to take their places. In consequence of this, some were whipped, some were fined, some imprisoned, and many were much persecuted.”³ Freeborn Garrettson was beaten and jailed as a pacifist, loyal to his country, but opposed to war, and he wrote: “Many of our pious friends were absolutely against fighting, and some of them suffered much on that account, for they were compelled or taken by force into the field; though they would sooner have lost their own lives than take the life of any human creature.”⁴

At the close of the last war the commander of the British fleet, Admiral Sir David Beatty, said, “If half of the zeal and passion, half of the outpouring of life and treasure, of organization and efficiency, that the state has put into this war could be thrown into the cause of the kingdom and of the eternal verities, the world would soon be won.” Longfellow had said the same thing,

“Were half the power that fills the world with terror,
 Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,
 Given to redeem the human mind from error,
 There were no need of arsenals or forts.”

The missionary secretary of the Presbyte-

³Jesse Lee, *History of Methodists*, p. 78.

⁴Bangs, *Life and Times of the Rev. Freeborn Garrettson*, p. 121.

rian Church, Dr. Arthur J. Brown, declares that the entire missionary program of the American churches, employing twenty-four thousand American workers and one hundred and nine thousand native workers, is being carried on at an expense less than that of one battleship. What if all the battleships had been junked and all the cost of them and of all other military preparedness and equipment had been put into the work of education and of evangelization in the less favored lands, does anyone suppose for a minute that the world would not be a thousand times better off than it is to-day?

What if all the money we put into the patrolling and the menacing of the Mexican borders before the Great War had been spent on schools and churches for the Mexicans, would we not have more to show for it to-day both in general good and in general good will? What if all the money we are spending to-day upon our army and navy were spent in a campaign of preaching democracy and peace in Japan, would not the world be a safer and better world to live in than it is now? The government experts calculate that the total cost of the Great War was about one hundred and seventy-nine billions of dollars, and with that sum we have purchased a world well-nigh

bankrupt and filled with famine and pestilence and hate. The pacifists could have made better use of that money. It would seem that the most of it was wasted.

The Manchester Guardian estimates the total casualties of the war at seventeen and one half millions. What did the world get in return for the sacrifice of these millions of lives? It got the world of to-day; and is the world of to-day so much better than the world of yesterday as to warrant such an outlay of money and men? Is this world bettered in any respect? There are those who think we will have a worse world to live in as long as we live. Can anyone doubt that if these millions of men and these billions of money had been used in the pursuits of peace we would have had a better result than we now have after squandering them in war?

It has been said that there are three armies left in every country after a great war—an army of cripples, an army of mourners, and an army of thieves. Our generation and the next and the next will have the aftermath of the great conflict and the moral backwash of the great armies and the want and the wretchedness of the poverty-stricken peoples upon our hands and it will make it all the more difficult to find money and men to carry on

the work of God in the world. A high dignitary in the church draws a pathetic figure of Uncle Sam going depressed and sorrowful until the people poured out their treasure and the world poured out its life in the Great War. Then he drew a companion picture of the Crucified One asking for millions of money and thousands and thousands of men to heal the wounds of the war-weary world; and he fancied him facing toward a second crucifixion of disappointment in the answer to his call.

You cannot squander the life of the youth of the world and have the same resources available for Christian work afterward. You cannot send millions of men down into the hell of war and have them come up ready for the work of angels of light. You cannot spend a series of years in educating a world in murder and hate and then have the result of that education apparent in a multitude of volunteers for foreign missions. It is not the young people who are crucifying the Lord afresh in their slowness of response to the call for recruits in the world's evangelization. It is the old people who in their anxiety to stand well with the authorities crucified the Lord afresh by preaching, "Blessed are the militarists, for they shall be called the beloved sons

of Uncle Sam, and they shall wave the flag and enjoy the popular favor; but as for the pacifists, a curse be upon them until the war is over."

2. *Persecution.* I saw a Figure in a flowing robe and with a scar upon his forehead and scars upon his hands, and behind him there was a high stone wall and the sun shone full on his face and his arms were stretched out at right angles so that a shadow of a cross fell upon the wall; and he was saying, "Blessed are the peacemakers, the pacifists; for they shall be called the sons of God," and a line of men in uniform were standing with their guns leveled at his breast, ready to take the life of anyone who interfered with their war business by repeating such words, and a bishop was blessing them and giving the order to fire.

(1) *Mennonites.* We do not crucify pacifists to-day, but we sometimes court-martial them. Senator Norris, of Nebraska, was a judge before he was made senator and he said: "The Mennonites are the best people on earth. I never have seen one of them in court. If everybody were as good as they, there would be no need of courts and prisons." The Mennonites are pacifists and they refused to be conscripted for service in war. Four of them were sent to Alcatraz Island in San Francisco

Bay and put into a dungeon prison there. It was reported in the public press that for thirty-six hours they were handcuffed by the wrists to an iron bar so high that it barely allowed their feet to touch the ground.

They were stripped to their underwear. They were not allowed any blankets or covering of any kind. They were not given a bite of food and only one glass of water. They were chilled to the bone, nearly naked, hungry and thirsty, and the pain of their "stringing up" tortured every nerve. It was almost equal to the agony of crucifixion. Guards came in and beat them brutally with clubs. They could have had their freedom at any moment by renouncing their pacifism, but that meant to them a betrayal of their Master, and they refused. Some people may think they were fools, but nobody can think they were cowards.

After thirty-six hours they were let down from their torturing position, but they were kept for five days in that dungeon with no food and no bed and no possibility of rest except on the water-soaked floor. They came out of that dungeon physically weakened and covered with scurvy eruptions. They were sent to Fort Leavenworth and put into solitary confinement, where in ten days two of

them died of pneumonia, contracted in their weakened condition by sleeping on the bare cement floor. If they were as faithful to the spirit of Jesus in everything else as they were in their pacifism, can we believe anything other than that they went from that prison cell straight into heaven, and that Jesus said to them: "Come, ye blessed pacifists, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Ye shall be called the sons of God; and those devils in human form who inflicted your martyrdom may go into the place prepared for them"?

(2) *Debs.* Eugene Debs was in prison in Atlanta when he said: "I am against war. I am a traitor, no doubt, in the eyes of Attorney-General Palmer and the Department of Justice, and perhaps some of the American people. But the words 'Thou shalt not kill' mean to me just what they say. I would not kill in defense of my own life, and I certainly would not hire to someone else to do his killing for him. I am against war, and I would go to the gallows without the slightest qualm of fear, preaching my opposition to war." He was a pacifist. He was a protestant against war, and that sent him to prison.

After some months and years there he was set free and a correspondent of the New York

World interviewed him just before his release and reported that he had paid no price of recantation for his freedom. "Debs not only said he was not sorry for any utterance of his own with respect to the war, but reiterated his opinion, and declared that he would not support any war for any government on earth." That may be fidelity to the teaching of Jesus. There always have been those of good authority in the interpretation of the New Testament who have thought so. That was high treason in America during the war.

It was astonishing how cowardly the militarists were during the war. They had all the armies and navies on their side. They had the courts and the pulpits lined up in their behalf. They had the press and public opinion solidly arrayed in their support. Yet they were mortally afraid of a mere handful of pacifists. They were afraid to permit them to speak or to write. They were afraid to have their views voiced in any way. They broke up their meetings, thrust them into prison, silenced them by force. They were bullies and cowards, afraid of the truth, afraid of the light, afraid of even such paltry opposition.

They made all constitutional guarantees of free assembly, free press, and free speech

mere scraps of paper. Nobody was allowed to think or write or speak except according to orders. To discourage conscription was to invite and insure persecution, imprisonment, death. There was nothing sportsmanlike about it. The pacifist had no equal chance. He was simply crushed by brutal force, if he did not see eye to eye with the military despots.

3. *Labor.* Newman Smyth arraigned the labor unions for putting into their constitutions a clause against military service and talked the usual clerical patter in favor of militarism and in abhorrence to treason. To him one of the members of the New Haven Trades Union made this answer: "One of the saddest things we listened to to-night was to hear a minister of the gospel trying to rally men around a proposition that involved their coolly and deliberately taking the lives of others. Now, a battlefield to me has all the horrors of hell, absolutely, and I can conceive no kind of justification that will permit me and justify me in taking the life of my fellow man. I cannot do it and I will not do it at any man's behest. I am not that kind of a patriot. . . ."

"We have a somewhat loftier conception of patriotism. Our love of human kind is not

restricted by the accidental geographical boundaries of any state or of any country. . . . If it squares with our friend's idea of correct modes of living to prefer to give to a professional killer of men, a man who engages in the business of killing men and accepts pay for it; . . . if it is in accordance with his ideas of the teachings of Christ to give preference to such a man over one who is opposed to killing his fellow men, then I say that I do not agree with his ideas of Christianity. As I understand the gentle Nazarene, he was the Prince of Peace; and I do not understand that he came among the people to preach war and slaughter and devastation. . . . I say that it is a distinct advancement along the lines of human progress, and attests a higher degree of civilization and the greater recognition of the responsibilities of human beings, for a class of men to say, 'Henceforth we cease to murder one another.' "

Which of these two went down to his home that night justified of Jesus? The theological professor and the Doctor of Divinity or the plain workingman who took his divinity undoctored straight from the lips of the Carpenter of Nazareth? Some of the workingmen seem to find it easier to come into sympathy

with Jesus than many in the middle class and the more aristocratic circles of professed Christians.

John Bright stood in the House of Commons and said, "Even if I were alone, if mine were the solitary voice raised amid the din of arms and the clamor of a venal press, I should have the priceless consolation that no word of mine has tended to produce the squandering of a penny of my country's treasure and the spilling of a drop of my country's blood." That statement recalls a modern parallel. Robert Smillie was the head of the Miners' Federation in England during the Great War. The story goes that he and a party of friends were passing the famous war poster in which the child says to his father, "Daddy, what did *you* do in the great war?" "Well, Bob," said one of the men, "what is your answer when your grandchild puts it to you?" and Smillie answered, "I'll tell him that I did my best to stop the bloody business."

Some time before the throne Jesus will ask some of our preachers, "What did you do in the Great War?" and they will answer: "I waved the flag and beat the drum and did all I could to help on the glorious business. I was too old to go myself, but I preached patri-

otism to beat the band until I induced scores of young fellows to go out and sacrifice their lives, even as you did on the cross." Then will Jesus say to them: "Inasmuch as you did it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, you did it unto me. You have made me to suffer and to sacrifice again in my people. It is even as you have said; and you have crucified afresh the Son of God."

CHAPTER X

THE SEVENTH BEATITUDE:
FURTHER INDICTMENT OF WAR

1. *Negation of Personal Responsibility.* Woodrow Wilson said: "The Bible reveals every man to himself as a distinct moral agent responsible not to men, not even to those men whom he has put over him in authority, but responsible to his Lord and Maker. Whenever a man sees this vision he stands a free man." They are fine words; but like so many other words of our ex-President, he did not seem to expect them to be put into deeds, at least not by any conscientious objector in time of war. There were those who believed that killing men was a bad business and that to abrogate all your scruples on that subject and to kill a man on somebody else's orders was just as wicked as to kill on your own volition.

W. J. Fox puts the truth plainly when he says: "Does the command of a superior justify a violation of the laws of God? If it does for the hired soldier, it does also for the hired assassin. Suppose a man were to go to Copenhagen and shoot a person whom he never

saw before; then to Washington and stab another, by whom he was never injured; then to the coast of France, and burn a third in his own house: what would all this be but repeated and atrocious murder? Would its moral character be changed by the command of a prince, minister, or general? Certainly not any more than their command would justify perjury or forgery."¹

Discipline is a good thing, but when it becomes a fetish, an end in itself, it tends to atrophy of both will and conscience and utterly demoralizes the individual's initiative and self-respect. Military discipline demands the suppression of the sense of personal responsibility for one's deeds. Therefore, it demands and enforces immorality, for the abnegation of personal responsibility is in itself immoral. To transfer one's conscience to an intangible thing called the government, or to one's military superiors is to abdicate one's freedom and become a slave.

A soldier does not dare to think for himself. He must do what he is told, no matter what he may think about it. He must be a soldier first and a Christian afterward. He abandons his own moral responsibility. He gives up his free will. His intellect must be

¹W. J. Fox, *Collected Works*, vol. viii, p. 250.

dormant and his conscience quiescent, and he must be content to be a cog in a machine. When told to do it, he must kill a man as intelligent and as sincere and as patriotic and as brave as himself, and he must take his chances on killing a man worth ten times as much to the world along all these lines as he ever can hope to be. The man who does that is as unfortunate as the man who gets killed; and he may be considered a criminal in the sight of high heaven.

Taft was talking to the young men at West Point and he said, "The plainest of your duties is to keep your mouths shut and obey orders." It is the first and great commandment in military matters. In 1891 Emperor William of Germany said to his new recruits, "You have taken the oath of allegiance to me; this means, children of my Guards, that you are now my soldiers, you have given yourselves up to me, body and soul. Only one enemy exists for you—my enemy. With the present socialist intrigues it may happen that I shall order you to shoot your own relatives, your brothers, or even your parents—and then you are in duty bound to obey my orders unhesitatingly." Tolstoi read these words and his comment was: "Poor sick miserable man, intoxicated with power, who by those words insults all

that is sacred to men of modern civilization!" It is the attitude of every military commander. He requires unhesitating and unquestioning obedience from all his men. They must not think for themselves. Frederick the Great is reported to have said, "If my soldiers were to begin to reflect, not one of them would remain in the ranks."

A good soldier will be an automaton. The more obedient he is to orders, the more he allows others to do his thinking for him, the better soldier he will be. Some men really enjoy having other men do their thinking for them. To have no responsibility, to have everything determined for them, to be told when to go to bed and when to get up and just how to put on their collars and to lace their boots gives some men a peace which passes all understanding, something of the peace of the pig fattening in its sty. However, that peaceful condition has its disadvantages; for, if the soldier is ordered out to certain and useless slaughter, he must not reason why, he must not make reply, he must permit himself to be snuffed out of existence like a fly, and thus prove that he is a model soldier, well disciplined to live or die.

2. *Negation of morals.* War is the negation of ordinary morals. John Ruskin said,

“The first reason for all wars, and for the necessity of national defenses, is that the majority of persons are thieves and, in their hearts, greedy of their neighbor’s goods, land, and fame.” Born of covetousness, wars thrive on iniquity. Channing said: “War is the concentration of all human crimes. Under its standard gather violence, malignity, rage, fraud, perfidy, rapacity, and lust. The field of battle is a theater, got up at immense cost, for the exhibition of crime on a grand scale.”

Lecky is just as drastic in his indictment of the inherent and inevitable immorality of war when he declares: “Destruction is one of War’s chief ends, and Deception one of its chief means. One of the greatest arts of a successful generalship is to deceive in order to destroy. Whatever other elements may mingle with and dignify war, this at least is never absent, and however reluctantly men may enter into war, however conscientiously they may endeavor to avoid it, they must know that when the scene of carnage has once opened, these things must be not only accepted and condoned, but stimulated, encouraged, and applauded. It would be difficult to conceive a disposition more remote from the morals of ordinary life, not to speak of the

Christian ideals, than that with which soldiers, most animated with the fire and passions that lead to victory, rush forward to bayonet the foe."

(1) *Lying*. It is considered perfectly justifiable to deceive the enemy. Lying becomes a fine art in war time. Honesty and truthfulness are incompatible with a successful military campaign. They must be laid on the shelf until war is over. There was bitter irony in the words of Sir Garnet Wolseley when he said: "We will keep hammering along with the conviction that honesty is the best policy and that truth always wins in the long run. These pretty little sentences will do for a child's copybook, but the man who acts upon them in war had better sheath his sword forever." Untruthful and unreliable propaganda becomes a chief resource in war. Lies are marshaled like men and are spent just as unsparingly in the prosecution of a campaign. In the *Manual of Military Law*, issued by the British War Office in 1914, we read, "Among legitimate ruses may be counted . . . transmitting bogus signals and telegraph messages, and sending bogus dispatches and newspapers with a view to their being intercepted by the enemy. . . . It is not illegitimate to employ spies, or even to corrupt

enemy civilians or soldiers by bribes in order to induce them to give information, to desert, to surrender, to rebel, or to mutiny, or to give false information to the enemy."

It is not only legitimate but it is the duty of the soldier to lie and to bribe and to do any other immoral and wicked thing which his superior officer may command; and he cannot do these things without doing despite to his own conscience and corrupting his own character. Spying and lying are as inseparable as Siamese Twins; and, unfortunately, war does not make them right and patriotism does not make them righteous. The principle that the end justifies the means may be the principle of the Jesuit, but it is not the principle of Jesus. He believed that it was better to die than to lie. He did not think that it was necessary to live, but he did think that it was necessary always to do right. He kept all the commandments all the time. Not many soldiers do that.

(2) *Adultery.* The commandments "Thou shalt not kill" and "Thou shalt not steal" and "Thou shalt not lie" are all systematically and deliberately broken in warfare, and the temptation to all soldiers is to disregard that other commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery" in the same manner. It is notorious

that soldiers are abnormally licentious and that all armies are apt to indulge themselves in rapine and lust; and it is equally notorious that in the armies of the nations venereal diseases always have been the dominant cause of disability.

We took the boys out of our Christian homes and churches and Sunday schools and sent them into training camps, where they were put under the instruction of "hard-boiled" sergeants, who hung up dummies before them and taught them how to run their bayonets through them; and they were told, "Give the bayonet a twist as you pull it out, so as to make the wound mortal. When I say *one*, twist at the head: when I say *two*, twist at the heart: when I say *three*, stick it into his guts. Now, *three!* Grit your teeth and grunt when you stick your bayonet into him. Now twist it as you pull it out, so as to make a jagged gash! Do it as if you meant it! Now, at it again!"

It was quite different from the instruction and the atmosphere of the Christian home and the Sunday school, and a few weeks and months of it changed many of the boys quite radically. Did it make them more sensitive to spiritual things?

In the heat of conflict many soldiers have

testified that they have been seized with a perfect frenzy for killing. They have become possessed of a spirit as remote from the spirit of Jesus as could be imagined. Donald Hankey said: "A change comes over a man when his bayonet is red with the blood of his first victim. He sees red. The primitive blood lust, kept under all his life by the principles of peaceful society, surges through his being, transforms him, maddens him with a desire to kill, kill, kill." The soldier himself knows that he is never more un-Christian than in such moments. He is more like an unbridled devil than an ideal man. He is more like a maniac than a son of God.

Robert Hall stated the patent truth when he said, "War is nothing less than a temporary repeal of the principles of virtue," and an English militarist frankly states his conclusion: "Morality—immorality! What are such things to great nations when their fate is at stake?" Let no one think of morals until the national existence has been saved. Jesus said something about gaining life and at the same time losing it: but nobody must give any heed to Jesus until the war is over. Morality and militarism are incompatibles. Immorality and militarism are inevitable associates: for war is a sin, and many of the

war methods are sinful and the prosecution of any war results in the propagation of immorality on a large scale.

The Old Testament law said: "Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery." More than once Jesus sanctioned these laws and adopted them even as he transcended them in the laws of his own kingdom. He had not come to destroy these laws but to fulfill them. The prohibition of killing he adopted and re-enforced by the prohibition of anger without cause. The prohibition of adultery he adopted and re-enforced by the prohibition of the adulterous look and thought. "Thou shalt not kill" was just as absolute a command to him as "Thou shalt not commit adultery."¹ War is organized with intent to kill, and history proves that it results in multiplied adulteries. From the standpoint of Jesus war is organized immorality, since murder is the one motive of its being; and it almost inevitably results in the negation of morals all along the line.

3. *Negation of Human Values.* Christianity teaches that every man is of infinite worth in the sight of the God who made him and the Christ who redeemed him and the Spirit who woos him to repentance and salvation.

¹Matt. 5. 21-32. Matt. 19. 17-19.

Whittier expressed this conception of the intrinsic value of humanity in his verse:

Give human nature reverence for the sake
 Of One who bore it, making it divine
 With the ineffable tenderness of God;
 Let common need, the brotherhood of prayer,
 The heirship of an unknown destiny,
 The unsolved mystery round about us make
 A man more precious than the gold of Ophir.

War is the negation of this conception of the value of man. The millions are conscripted and the millions are slaughtered and the war-makers rejoice if a Socialist republic takes the place of a monarchy or a Soviet republic overthrows a Czar, or if a fortress is taken or a city is captured, as if these things were worth far more than millions of men. Men are made nothing but pawns in the great game of diplomacy. Property is considered more valuable than people. A little added territory is worth more than many citizens. Eight million lives were sacrificed to the military ambition of Napoleon. Three hundred and fifty-nine thousand soldiers were slain on the Union side alone in the American Civil War to coerce the South to remain under the national government. There were over seventeen million casualties in the Great War. "It has been estimated that fourteen hundred

billions of human beings have been killed in war since history began." The safety of democracy is purchased with the lives of those who might have been democrats if the military autocracy had not decreed their death.

Men are made gun fodder. The report of a thousand slain is received with the greatest equanimity by the powers which sent them to the field; and if a million of the enemy die, it is considered good riddance and a matter for rejoicing. A man in the ranks is no more than a beast that perisheth to satisfy another man's whim or will. The infinite value of the human soul is lost sight of on the battlefield. The Fatherhood of God is forgotten. The brotherhood of man is a myth. Brothers curse and kill each other, and armies of men are accounted only as sheep for the slaughter. Nothing further removed from the realization of the kingdom of God upon earth can be imagined. In the roar of the cannon and the bursting of bombs no one ever hears or heeds the voice of this young Evangelist of Galilee, who said, "Blessed are the pacifists, for they shall be called the sons of God."

War is the negation of all human values. It sets out deliberately to destroy human life. Its one end and aim is to turn living men into corrupting corpses. What men have built up

by years of sacrifice and toil, churches, cathedrals, factories, fertile fields, happy homes, collections of art—all that represents their spiritual endeavor and achievement, all that men have put their lives and souls into, War ruthlessly wrecks and destroys. If it is of no profit to a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul, what shall we say of war, which never yet has gained a world while it has destroyed millions upon millions of human souls?

There is something worse than the suffering of the bodies of men. There is something worse than the waste of human life. It is the enthroning of evil in the heart, the awful wickedness and wrong of war. It is the enemy of the soul of man. No matter how righteous a cause it may plead, it goes about its work unrighteously. It thrives upon deception and fosters hate. It regards the enemy as a Hun or a demon, never to be trusted, only to be destroyed. It is a criminal and insane method of settling any question of right, and the Christian who engages in it must chloroform his conscience and abdicate his reason and put his religion on the shelf. He cannot go out and fight like a devil as long as he is burdened with any of these things.

4. *Negation of Peace.* Every war professes

to be waged for the purpose of securing peace, and after the long centuries of failure along that line it surely would seem that nobody but a fool ever could hope to end war by warring. Every war sows the seed of future conflicts and multiplies the reasons for hatred and strife. The kingdoms of this world never will become the kingdoms of our Lord and Christ through the victories of war but only by the victories of peace. For centuries Christian soldiers have gone into all the world and shot at every creature, and still the world remains unsaved.

The day of the final victory of our faith will not come as long as the church is the mere handmaid of the state and takes its orders from the military headquarters instead of from God, and in the time of every war prostitutes its heavenly mission to professedly patriotic propaganda instead of proving its genuine patriotism by its unswerving loyalty to the Prince of Peace. The church loses the respect even of the powers which it serves and the masses of people call it the harlot of hell rather than the bride of Christ.

The church must consistently and persistently proclaim that war is an anachronism and a supreme folly and sin, that it is irrational and inhuman and un-Christian, and it

must be as true to that proclamation in times of war as it is in times of peace, in order to regain and retain the confidence of the peoples of the earth. It must declare and maintain that war cannot be waged by anybody for any reason "without being an outrage on humanity, a disgrace to civilization, and a gross sin against God."

Bertrand Russell says: "The influence of the Christian religion on daily life has decayed very rapidly throughout Europe during the last hundred years. Not only has the proportion of nominal believers declined, but even among those who believe the intensity of belief is enormously diminished." If he is right, one reason for that fact is to be found in the loss of faith in the church which has professed to represent the ideals of the Christian life and has betrayed them so egregiously on the occasion of every war. It has not really believed that the idealism of the Sermon on the Mount is the most practical and permanently effective program for world betterment, and therefore it has failed to practice it. It will continue to lose in influence and power in the degree to which it is unfaithful to the teaching of its Lord. It must repent and renew its vows. It must become pacifist in principle and must be true to its principles in any and

every war, or its candlestick will be removed and some other agency of God will be used to bring in the new day of universal brotherhood and peace.

CHAPTER XI

THE SEVENTH BEATITUDE:
THE COMING OF PEACE

PEACE is coming. We believe it as firmly now as any of the ancient prophets did. Reason is on our side. Sometime all men will see the utter folly of war. Right is on our side. Sometime the race will realize that violence and might never can determine and establish right, but righteousness can be established and maintained in peace. Civilization is on our side. War threatens its very existence and in self-defense the civilized nations will in time abolish their greatest enemy. Religion is on our side; and that means that God will give us the victory.

1. *Promise of peace.* There is to be an age of universal peace, when all the armor of the armed man in the tumult, and the garments rolled in blood, shall be for burning, for fuel of fire;¹ when the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness shall be quietness and confidence forever;² when

¹Isa. 9. 5.

²Isa. 32. 17.

they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks, and nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more;³ when the Prince of Peace shall guide all feet into the way of peace, and of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end;⁴ when the meek shall inherit the earth and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace;⁵ when there shall be peace upon earth among men of continuous goodwill⁶

The prophets of Israel foresaw it. Jesus came and preached the possibility of its realization. He said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God."⁷ He said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I to you . . ."⁸ These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace."⁹ The apostles carried on the message, "Be at peace among yourselves."¹⁰ "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts,"¹¹ "God hath called us to peace."¹² The time is coming when the world will be at peace and the nobler nature

³Mic. 4. 3.

⁴Isa. 9. 7.

⁵Psa. 37. 11.

⁶Luke 2. 14.

⁷Matt. 5. 9.

⁸John 14. 27.

⁹John 16. 33.

¹⁰1 Thes. 5. 13.

¹¹Col. 3. 5.

¹²1 Cor. 7. 15.

of man will have conquered the brute instincts of greed and hate and the selfish struggle for advantage over one's neighbor will be succeeded by universal co-operation for the common good. It is the glorious end toward which we labor.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation!¹³ Peace and salvation seem to be synonymous in the parallelism of the prophet's rhapsody. War means the destruction of the race. If the race is to be saved, it will be only in peace. Those who go to war to gain any good end lose more at the outset than they ever can hope to gain in the outcome. Good ends are not to be reached by evil means. The very use of the means makes good results impossible. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles. A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. Going to war never will insure peace. The fruit of righteousness, with peace, will be sown by them that cultivate peace.¹⁴

The day will come when man will deal with man not according to his deserts, even as God does not deal with men according to their

¹³Isa. 5. 27.

¹⁴James 3. 18.

deserts. Men will deal with men in international brotherhood, since their God does not regard nationalities in the bestowal of his providential gifts to the race. The present world-states founded upon force and maintained by force will be merged into the new order based upon reason and persuasion and maintained in the fellowship of reconciliation and love. War will be outlawed and peace will be universally cherished.

Is this impossible? Is it merely a dream, as unsubstantial as other dreams which lose their impressiveness in our working hours? We are gravely assured that it is. "We must frankly admit at once that there is a dream of peace which will never be realized. We must clearly and unhesitatingly face the fact that this dream is a baseless fabric which will only lead to bitter disillusionment at last. This is the dream of peace through contagious gentleness. This is the dream of peace through triumphant friendliness. This is the dream of peace through a world-wide hatred of war which will become so dominant that nobody will be willing to fight."¹⁵

If dogmatic assertion could settle a matter, evidently this matter would be settled at once by these statements; but they are the state-

¹⁵Hough, *The Clean Sword*, p. 149.

ments of one whose fundamental faith is not in friendliness and goodness, but in preparedness and force. How can he believe that the will of God ever will be done upon earth as it is done in heaven? How can he pray in faith, "Thy Kingdom come, here and now"? His spirit is that of a jingoist and not of Jesus. There are saner and more authoritative voices on the other side.

2. *Prophets of Peace.* (1) *Grant.* Is it an impossible ideal? General Grant did not think so. He said: "Though I have been trained as a soldier, and have participated in many battles, there never was a time in my judgment when some way could not have been found to prevent the drawing of the sword. I look forward confidently to the day when all questions which arise between nations will be settled by great international tribunals rather than by the appeal to arms."

(2) *Mahan.* Admiral Mahan did not think so. He declared: "I believe with full intensity of personal conviction, that when moral motives come to weigh heavier with mankind than do material desires there will be no war. . . . The truth still remains as stated by Jesus Christ twenty centuries ago, that between material and moral motives men and nations must commit themselves to a definite

choice; one or the other—not both. We cannot serve God and Mammon. . . . I believe that the time is coming when conviction of this truth will take effect in practice, and that indication of its distant arrival can be seen.”

(3) *Church.* Dean Church did not think so. He wrote: “The ancient world looked upon war and conflict as the natural field for the highest virtues. . . . It was a great reversal of all accepted moral judgment, and of all popular traditions, when the teaching of the gospel put in the forefront of its message God’s value for peace, and his blessing upon it, . . . and, however in practice Christians have fallen short of it, this standard of what is true and right never has been and never can be lowered. Do not let anyone cheat us out of our inheritance of peace by saying that God means it for heaven, not for earth. He means it for time as well as for eternity. Let us in the name of God defy the mocking voices which appeal to experience to prove that the world can be but a great scene of strife; that none but enthusiasts can dream of peace here. That will be according to our faith. That will be according as we master the powers of evil which are the enemies of peace.”

(4) *Fiske*. Are these things impossible? John Fiske did not think so. In his book, *The Destiny of Man*, he says: "The great originality of the teaching of Jesus, and the feature that has chiefly given it power in the world, lay in the distinctness with which he conceived a state of society from which every vestige of strife, and the modes of behavior adapted to ages of strife, shall be utterly and forever swept away. . . . The future is lighted for us with the radiant colors of hope. . . . Strife and sorrow shall disappear. Peace and love shall reign supreme."

(5) *Bushnell*. Horace Bushnell did not think so. He said: "A day will come when the dominion of ignorance and physical force, when the distinctions of blood, and accidents of fortune, will cease to rule the world. Beauty, reason, science, personal worth, and religion will come into their rightful supremacy, and moral forces will preside over physical as mind over the body. Liberty and equality will be so far established that every man will have a right to his existence, and, if he can make it so, to an honorable, powerful and happy existence. Policy will cease to be the same as cunning and become a study of equity and reason."

"It is impossible that wars should not be

discontinued, if not by the progress of the international code, as we have hinted, yet by the progress of liberty and intelligence; for the masses who have hitherto composed the soldiery must sometime discover the folly of dying as an ignoble herd, to serve the passions of a few reckless politicians, or to give a name for prowess to leaders whose bravery consists in marching them into danger. The arbitrament of arms is not a whit less absurd than the old English trial by battle, and before the world has done rolling they will both be classed together,

“Who shall think it incredible that this same progress of moral legislation, which has gone thus far in the international code, may ultimately be so far extended as to systematize and establish rules of arbitrament, by which all national disputes shall be definitely settled without an appeal to arms? And so it shall result that, as the moral code is one, all law shall come into unity, and a kind of virtual oneness embrace all nations. We shall flow together in the annihilation of distances and become brothers in the terms of justice.”

(6) *Hugo*. Is it nothing but a dream? Victor Hugo did not think so. He said: “A day will come when war will appear as absurd, and be as impossible, between Paris and Lon-

don, between Saint Petersburg and Berlin, between Vienna and Turin, as it would now be between Rouen and Amiens, between Boston and Philadelphia. A day will come when you, France, you, Russia, you, Italy, you, England, you, Germany—when all of you, nations of the Continent, will, without losing your distinctive qualities and your glorious individualities, be blended into a superior unity, and constitute a European fraternity, just as Normandy, Brittany, Burgundy, have been blended into France. A day will come when the only battlefield will be the market opening to commerce and the mind opening to new ideas.

“A day will come when bullets and bombs will be replaced by votes, by the universal suffrage of nations, by the venerable arbitration of a great sovereign senate which will be to Europe what the Parliament is to England, what the Diet is to Germany, what the Legislative Assembly is to France. A day will come when a cannon will be exhibited in public museums just as an instrument of torture is now, and people will wonder how such a thing could ever have been. A day will come when those two immense groups, the United States of America and the United States of Europe, shall be seen standing before each

other, extending the hand of fellowship across the ocean, exchanging their products, their commerce, their industry, their arts, their genius, clearing the earth, peopling the deserts, improving creation under the eye of the Creator, and uniting, for the good of all, those two irresistible and infinite powers, the fraternity of men and the power of God."

Horace Bushnell and Victor Hugo and General Grant lay chief stress upon arbitration and international courts of law and the federated parliaments of man as the means of securing and maintaining universal peace among men. These may be the methods adopted as most suitable to that end; but back of all these, to establish them and to sustain them, there must be the spirit of Jesus, there must be the acceptance of his statement, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God."

(7) *Arbitration*. In the nineteenth century in disputes between nations two hundred and twelve awards were made by courts of arbitration. Not one of them was repudiated by either side in the dispute. In eight cases there was dissatisfaction and the case was retried and thus brought to an amicable settlement. In 1903 Chile and Argentina signed the first unlimited arbitration treaty, provid-

ing that all disputes which might arise between the two nations should be submitted to arbitration. How did they commemorate that most notable event? They made a colossal statue of the Christ, cast from old cannon, and set it up in the heights of the Andes on the border line between the two lands; and on the base of that statue they put this inscription, "Sooner shall these mountains crumble into dust than Argentina and Chile break the peace to which they have pledged themselves at the feet of Christ the Redeemer." That Christ of the Andes is the modern representative of the Jesus who preached the Sermon on the Mount. The nations must be brought to his feet before they can find peace.

Nothing roused the wrath of Theodore Roosevelt so much as the suggestion of universal arbitration. He said: "The universal and all-inclusive arbitration people, and most of the men and the women who have taken the lead in the pacifist movement in this country during the last five or ten years, are preaching international cowardice. The college boys who adopt professional pacifist views, who make peace leagues and preach the doctrine of international cowardice, are unfitting themselves for any career more manly than that of nursery maid." They were all "mollycod-

dles" to him. Jesus called them "the sons of God." The church must decide which of these opposing voices speaks wisdom; and if it decides to follow Jesus, it must labor with such courage as Jesus had to bring the world to the better view.

(8) *Free Trade.* Cobden thought that free trade would bring universal peace in the long run. He said: "I believe that the desire and motive for large and mighty empires, for gigantic armies and great navies—for those materials which are used for the destruction of life and the desolation of the rewards of labor—will die away. I believe that such things will cease to be necessary, or to be used, when man becomes of one family, and freely exchanges the fruits of his labor with his brother man."

The arguments for the economical and political advantages of free trade never have been answered, and they are unanswerable. The case for protection always is the case for the protection of vested interests which stand to gain at the expense of the community. Private and not public interests are protected by hostile commercial legislation. High tariffs are not helpful to peace. Free trade is a step toward international co-operation in good will. Nevertheless, the only sufficient guaran-

tee of permanent peace among the people is to be found in that good will itself and the good will can be assured only in the adoption of the spirit and principles of Jesus.

(9) *Mann*. The disciples of Jesus could bring it about in consistent preaching and practice. They could have done it long ago if they had been loyal to the Master. Horace Mann was right when he said: "If a thousandth part of what has been expended in war and in preparing its mighty engines had been devoted to the development of reason and the diffusion of Christian principle, nothing would have been known for centuries past of its terrors, its sufferings, its impoverishment, and its demoralization, but what was learned from history." If Christianity had consistently refused to carry arms, even as it did in the first two centuries, its patience and service and sacrifice would have won the world long ago and the horrors of the great holocaust of our century would have been impossible.

There surely is a sense in which the church has failed in its mission and there is a sense in which it can be held responsible for the results in world history. It has not labored for peace in the present as the pacifists do. It has been chauvinistic and jingoistic and militaristic down the centuries, and at the

same time it has piously folded its hands and sung,

“Down the dark future, through long generations,
The sounds of war grow fainter and cease;
And like a bell, with solemn, sweet vibrations,
I hear the voice of Jesus Christ say—‘Peace!’”

He does not say it far down the future only. He said it while he was here upon the earth. “Peace be unto you!” and it has been the business of the church to incarnate his spirit of peace and to propagate it through society and to spread it around the world, making peace in the individual life, and peace in families, and peace among peoples. Its gospel has been “the word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ.”¹⁶

¹⁶Acts 10. 36.

CHAPTER XII

THE SEVENTH BEATITUDE:
JESUS AND PEACE

1. *The Gospel of Peace.* Jesus came to bring peace upon the earth, peace between God and man and peace between man and man. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ,"¹ and then as a natural consequence we "follow after the things that make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."² In so doing we have "the peace of God which passeth all understanding which garrisons our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."³ Through Jesus we are to have peace within ourselves and peace with God above us and peace with all around us. We are to forbear and forgive, and be kind to one another in love.

For never in this world does hatred cease by hatred; Hatred ceases by love; this is always its nature.

The kingdom of God is to be spread through the earth not by violence and force, but only

¹Rom. 5. 1.

²Rom. 14. 19.

³Phil. 4. 7.

by the gentler methods of patience and faith and love. It is to be propagated only by the apostles of peace and never by the blustering bully of War.

“O people of the World, ye are the fruit of One Tree, and the leaves of One Branch. Put away the Sword, and put the Word in its place. Let not any man glory in that he loves his Country; let him, rather, glory in that he loves his kind.” So spake Baha’u’llah, the founder of the Bahaist faith which aims at unity of spirit among all the races and religions of men. If we allow a place, but only its rightful place, to patriotism, this adjuration becomes a most Christian sentiment. It voices the aspiration of the world-wide kingdom of God. Let patriotism be cherished, but always in subordination to the feeling of international brotherhood.

2. *Barabbas and Jesus.* From the beginning the church and the world has had to make its choice between Barabbas and Jesus. Barabbas was a patriot who was popular with the people because he had adopted the policy of vigorous resistance to the oppressor’s rule and had been involved in an insurrection in which, Mark says, he had committed murder.⁴ Jesus was a pacifist, and pacifism was not pop-

⁴Mark 15. 7.

ular in that day. The mob preferred the patriot and the warmaker and the murderer to the patient and unresisting Jesus. His heart was pure and his hands were clean of his brother's blood, but the people preferred the murdering militarist to him. Again and again the church has made the same choice. It has joined with the world and the flesh and the devil in their dependence upon military might and the murder and rapine inevitably accompanying the same; and in so doing it has crucified its Lord afresh.

Has not his heart been broken and bleeding once more as he looked upon the world at war in these last years and has seen his church hurraing and hallelujahing the militarists on their bloody way? Why has the church failed to make war impossible? James the brother of Jesus was a very plain-spoken man, and he suggests that it is because the church has become the pleasure-seeking paramour of the warring world, and has forgotten that friendship with the world is enmity against God.⁵

The church has been afraid to suffer the loss of all things in its loyalty to Christ. It has condoned national aggressiveness and diplomatic dishonesties and profiteering pa-

⁵James 4. 1-4.

triotism, and it has worn soft clothing and has dwelt in kings' palaces and has had its reward in popularity and patronage and promotion and financial assistance in any of its good enterprises which did not interfere with the prosecution of any governmental design. It has been a coward in the time of crisis. It has not had the bravery of its Master. It takes some courage to be a peace-maker.

God is the God of peace. Seven times in our New Testament that title is given him; six times in the Pauline Epistles and once in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly,"⁶ "The God of peace be with you all,"⁷ "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly,"⁸ "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace,"⁹ "Live in peace; and the God of Love and peace shall be with you,"¹⁰ "These things do, and the God of peace shall be with you,"¹¹ "The God of peace make you perfect."¹²

3. *The Ideal of Peace.* Jesus was the Prince of Peace.¹³ At his advent the heavenly hosts sang, "Peace upon earth among men of good will."¹⁴ His whole ministry was a min-

⁶ 1 Thess. 5. 23.

⁷ Rom. 15. 33.

⁸ Rom. 16. 20.

⁹ 1 Cor. 14. 33.

¹⁰ 2 Cor. 13. 11.

¹¹ Phil. 4. 9.

¹² Heb. 13. 20.

¹³ Isa. 9. 6.

¹⁴ Luke 2. 14.

istry of peace. He strove to bring men to be at peace with God and to be at peace with each other. His was a ministry of reconciliation. The Christian ideal is peace, personal and individual first of all and then universal and perpetual in the end. Every disciple of Jesus will put all his energies into the propaganda of peace. He will be a pacifist under all circumstances. He will be a peace-maker as long as there is discord anywhere in the universe. He will maintain his faith until he sees the ultimate triumph of his cause.

Faith in Jesus means faith in the final abolition of war. Faith in the Bible means allegiance to its ideal of peace among men. "You cannot look into the Bible," says Dr. Morley Punshon, "either into the Old Testament or into the New, without discovering that peace is, so to speak, the master blessing, the grand issue both of the Law and the gospel to mankind. It is the climax of the Jewish benediction, as if in those rich old times of Levitical costliness and beauty there were no higher blessedness than that, 'The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.'¹⁵

¹⁵Num. 6. 24-26.

“It is presented in glowing prophecy as the crowning result of the Messiah’s reign: ‘Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.’¹⁶ ‘In his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.’¹⁷ Floating through the ages as the understood purpose of incarnate Deity, it reappears in the song in which Heaven announced his advent to enraptured earth: ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.’¹⁸

“It was the Saviour’s chosen salutation, ‘Peace be unto you’¹⁹—the salutation with which his heralds were to inaugurate their entrance into a dwelling: ‘Peace be to this house.’²⁰ The dying Saviour bequeathed it to his followers as his most precious legacy of love. ‘Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.’²¹ And the apostle, in a prayer whose every emphatic word shows his estimate of its inestimable worth, supplicates the ‘God of peace to give peace always and by all means.’²²

The New Testament writers were true to the mind of the Master in insisting upon the

¹⁶Isa. 9. 7.

¹⁷Psa. 72. 7.

¹⁸Luke 2. 14.

¹⁹John 20. 21, 26.

²⁰Luke 10. 5.

²¹John 14. 27.

²²Thess. 3. 16.

all-importance of peace. Paul exhorted the Thessalonians, "Be at peace among yourselves."²³ He told the Galatians that the fruit of the Spirit was "love, joy, peace."²⁴ He reminded the Romans that the kingdom of God was "not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace."²⁵ He said to the Corinthians, "Be perfected; be comforted; be of the same mind; live in peace: and the God of love and peace shall be with you."²⁶ He asked the Ephesians "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."²⁷ The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews commands, "Follow after peace with all men."²⁸ It was the Master's ideal that there should be peace among the brethren, peace in the church and peace throughout the world.

Jesus did not say, "Blessed are the people who are of peaceable disposition." That may be true and it may not. There is a peace which is enforced; and in it a man may be peaceful because he is afraid to be anything else. That is the peace of mere cowardice, and Jesus never said that such a peace was blessed. There is the peace of sheer exhaustion, such as we have seen in some of the

²³1 Thess. 5. 13.

²⁴Gal. 5. 22.

²⁵Rom. 14. 17.

²⁶2 Cor. 13. 11.

²⁷Eph. 4. 3.

²⁸Heb. 12. 14.

countries of Europe since the Great War, and it may be consistent with smoldering hate and impotent rage; and Jesus never blessed a peace like that. It is merely a peace of truce or armistice which is filled with enmity and bitterness and waits only for recovered strength to break out again in open and desperate strife.

There is the peace of indifference, which is content to keep out of trouble simply by letting things alone, taking things easily, minding its own business and refusing to meddle and satisfying itself that things will muddle along somehow and come out all right in the end. That sort of peace is both selfish and cowardly, and Jesus never pronounced a beatitude upon it. There is the spurious peace of indifference and of impotence and of cowardice, and Jesus never said, "Blessed are those who are peaceful" because of any of these things.

4. *Beatitude Upon the Pacifist.* Jesus did not say, "Blessed are those who are peaceful." He said, "Blessed are the peace-makers," which is quite a different thing. The pacifist is not a passive-ist. He does not merely resignedly suffer. He is called to activity. He must be active for good. He has a task to perform and it is no easy task. He seeks

peace and ensues it. He is aggressive. He is a warrior for the right and he fights with the weapons of truth and love.

"Peace hath her victories

No less renowned than War: new foes arise,
Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains.

Help us to save free conscience from the paw
Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw."²⁹

Whoever helps in that warfare may be a pacifist, but he will find it impossible to be a passive-ist. He will need to be active all the time.

Xenophon and Plutarch use the same word which Jesus uses here as the term descriptive of ambassadors sent forth to negotiate peace between two warring powers. It is a dangerous business, even if it is an honorable one. The writer of the book of Proverbs tells us that there are seven things which God hates and which are an abomination to him, and one of them is "he that soweth discord among his brethren."³⁰ Jesus has now named seven things which God loves and upon which he pronounces his blessing, and the seventh one is he who makes peace among discordant brethren. It takes a man to do that. He must be very much of a man to do it.

²⁹Milton, 16th sonnet.

³⁰Prov. 6. 19.

(1) *His Manliness.* Men do not like to have others interfering in their quarrels, and the one who does it must be ready to take the consequences. A coward can let things alone and a coward can go with the crowd and a coward can be a noisy partisan. It is only a brave man who can possess his own soul in peace in the midst of universal commotion and who can look calmly on both sides of the question in dispute and then speak his mind firmly and gently, reasoning with reasonable men, pointing out faults to those blinded with passion, never compromising his principles, but persistently laboring for reconciliation and peace. It is no weakling who does that. He is very much of a man, and a very good man if he does that.

“What do they accomplish who take the sword?
 Now and then they cut off the ear of a servant
 of the high priest;
 Quite as often they lose their own.
 While they who say, ‘Put up thy sword into its
 place,’ tho’ they die, yet succeed
 Sometimes in changing the heart of the world.

“What is true peace but conscious strength?
 What is war but conscious weakness seeking to
 give proof of its strength?
 Peace is a god, not a goddess; a man, not a woman—
 A brawny, bearded man of might, with nothing but
 the kindly look in his eyes to distinguish him
 from the vulgar giant.

He can afford to smile at war, the headstrong boy,
 rushing, red-faced, blundering, blustering with
 impetuous arms, hither and thither.

Peace has outgrown all that, for Peace is a Man.

“And who is the bravest of the brave;
 The bravest hero ever born?
 ’Twas one who dared a felon’s grave,
 Who dared to breathe the scorn of scorn.
 Nay, more than this: when sword was drawn
 And vengeance waited for his word,
 He looked with pitying eyes upon
 The scene, and said, ‘Put up thy sword.’
 O God! could man be found to-day
 As brave to do, as brave to say?”

“‘Put up thy sword into its sheath,
 Put up thy sword, put up thy sword!’
 By Kedron’s brook thus spoke beneath
 The olive-trees our valiant Lord,
 Spoke calm and Kinglike. Sword and stave
 And torch and stormy men of death
 Made clamor. Yet he spake not save
 With loving word and patient breath
 The peaceful olive boughs beneath,
 ‘Put up thy sword within its sheath.’”

(2) *His Strength of Character.* The peace-maker suffers injustice, and endures it. He does not return evil for good, like a devil. He does not return evil for evil, as men do who go to war with each other. He overcomes evil with good, and that is heaven-like, Christlike, Godlike. It takes strength of character to do that, and to believe that in doing that one can

have peace. Only those of dauntless daring and of quenchless faith will undertake to bring peace upon the earth. The task is great enough to discourage any but the most heroic souls. It means the establishment of right relations everywhere. It means that love will dethrone selfishness in every heart. It means that righteousness will become universally supreme. It means that the will of God will have its way in all the race.

Who can hope and labor for any such result? No weak character ever will begin any effort to that end. Weak characters make war here upon the earth and hope to make peace and to have peace when they get to heaven; but whatever peace they get there will be ready-made. The only chance they ever will have of being peacemakers is here and now upon the earth; and the only chance they ever will have of enjoying the blessedness promised here by Jesus is in being pacifists here and now, even in time of war.

What if the pacifist does not succeed in making peace? He will succeed in winning for himself an immortal crown in the title of honor bestowed upon him by God. Jesus did not say, "Blessed are the pacifists, for they always shall succeed in making peace." He said, "Blessed are the pacifists, for they shall

be called the sons of God." What if the world does not give them that title? What if the world calls them cowards and says they are unpatriotic and ridicules them and despises them and imprisons them and court-martials them? Jesus said that if nobody else ever called them by that name the God of peace would do it. He would recognize them as his sons, true to the teaching and doing the work of his only-begotten Son whose business it was to gather together the things which had been scattered abroad and to bring those who were at war with one another to be at peace in him.

(3) *His Sanity.* Emerson was sure that war was the outcome of madness and cowardice and that when men became sane enough and brave enough nations could and would dwell together in security and peace. He said: "If you have a nation of men who have risen to that height of moral cultivation that they will not declare war, or carry arms, for they have not so much madness left in their brains, you have a nation of lovers, or benefactors, of true, great, and noble men. Let me know more of that nation; I shall not find them defenseless, with idle hands hanging at their sides. I shall find them men of love, honor, and truth; men of an immense indus-

try; men whose influence is felt to the ends of the earth; men whose very look and voice carry a sentence of horror and shame; and all forces yield to their energy and persuasion. Whenever we see the doctrine of peace embraced by a nation, we may be sure it will not be one that invites inquiry, but one, on the contrary, which has a friend in the bottom of the heart of every man, even of the violent and the base; one against which no weapon can prosper; one which is looked on as an asylum of the human race, and has the tears and the blessings of men."

There is no such nation on the face of the earth to-day. There are some pacifists who believe as Emerson did and who proclaim their beliefs as fearlessly as Jesus did, and in the atmosphere of war hysteria they are accounted the off-scouring of the earth. Even those who respect them for their principles and for the heroism with which they hold them while weaker spirits compromise or conceal their faith see them imprisoned and persecuted and make no protest lest they endanger their own popularity; while the thoroughgoing militarists revile them without measure and say all manner of evil against them, and if they dared and if they could, would break their stubborn or steadfast wills and do them to their death.

In the long run either the militarists or the pacifists will win out in this world. They will not live together forever. It is a battle to the finish between them. The militarists fight with torture and terrorism, with imprisonment and death. The pacifists fight only with the weapons of reason and love. Barabbas is the chosen hero on the one side. Jesus is the Prince of Peace on the other. The church as a whole has been halting between two opinions or has joined with the militarists and the mobs in preferring Barabbas and crucifying Jesus.

Therefore, both in the church and in the world the pacifist has had a hard time of it. Yet he has not been discouraged, for the Master added another beatitude which might have been spoken for his especial benefit.

CHAPTER XIII

THE EIGHTH BEATITUDE

JESUS said, "*Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you.*"

The word "blessed" occurs twice here and the exhortation to "rejoice," with the promise of great reward, is attached; and Delitzsch counted three more beatitudes in this paragraph, making the number ten in all, and paralleling them with the Ten Commandments in the ancient law. Most of the authorities, however, call this one additional beatitude and count it the eighth in the list. The "great reward" is not in addition to "the kingdom of heaven." The Kingdom comprises all the good men can have. Persecution is not essential to blessedness, but it is compatible with it. Jesus would make it clear to his disciples

that their blessedness could be maintained in the face of any slander or reviling or persecution which might come upon them. They could rejoice and be exceeding glad in the midst of these things, for they could have the approval of God and they would be in a worthy line of succession with the heroes of the faith in the past.

I. WHY PERSECUTION? 1. *Character*. Why would they be persecuted? Simply because of their character; simply because they were what these beatitudes asked them to be. Jesus said they would be persecuted "for righteousness' sake," and John Wesley merely enlarged on this thought when he said, "They are persecuted, because they are *poor in spirit*; that is, say the world, 'poor-spirited, mean, dastardly souls, good for nothing, not fit to live in the world':—because they *mourn*; 'They are such dull, heavy, lumpish creatures, enough to sink anyone's spirits that sees them! They are mere death heads; they kill innocent mirth, and spoil company wherever they come':—because they are *mEEK*; 'Tame, passive fools, just fit to be trampled upon':—because they *hunger and thirst after righteousness*; 'A parcel of hot-brained enthusiasts, gaping after they know not what, not content with rational religion, but running mad after

raptures and inward feelings':—because they are *merciful*, lovers of all, lovers of the evil and unthankful; 'Encouraging all manner of wickedness; nay, tempting people to do mischief by impunity: and men who, it is to be feared, have their own religion still to seek: very loose in their principles':—because they are *pure in heart*; 'Uncharitable creatures, that damn all the world, but those that are of their own sort! Blasphemous wretches, that pretend to make God a liar, to live without sin!'

"Above all, because they are *peacemakers*; because they take all opportunities of doing good to all men: this is the grand reason why they have been persecuted in all ages, and will be till the restitution of all things: 'If they would but keep their religion to themselves, it would be tolerable. But it is this spreading their errors, this infecting so many others, which is not to be endured. They do so much mischief in the world, that they ought to be tolerated no longer. It is true, the men do some things well enough; they relieve some of the poor. But this too is only done to gain the more to their party; and so, in effect, to do the more mischief!' Thus the men of the world sincerely think and speak. And the more the kingdom of God prevails, the more

the peacemakers are enabled to propagate lowliness, meekness, and all other divine tempers, the more mischief is done, in their account: consequently, the more they are enraged against the authors of this, and the more vehemently will they persecute them."¹

Paul knew whereof he spake when he said, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."² It will be their penalty for being godly in a godless world. They will be persecuted for righteousness' sake. They will be persecuted for Jesus' sake. Peter wrote to the elect, "Even if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye,"³ and when he wrote those words he may have been thinking of those early days when he and the apostles "departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name."⁴

Jerome said, "I give thanks unto my God for this, that I am found worthy of a place among those whom the world hateth." Did not Jesus say, "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets"?⁵ Not everybody spoke well of Jesus. They called him a false

¹Wesley, *Works*, vol. i, p. 205.

⁴Acts 5. 41.

²Tim. 3. 12.

⁵Luke 6. 26.

³1 Pet. 3. 14.

prophet and a fool, a Samaritan, one possessed of the devil, Beelzebub, a deceiver of the people and a blasphemer of God. His sensitive soul was cut to the quick by such appellations. Yet he rejoiced and was exceeding glad that he could suffer for righteousness' sake.

2. *Discipleship.* The disciple is not above his master. Paul was called a babbler when he preached Jesus and the resurrection at Athens and he was considered an insurrectionist at Ephesus and he was condemned as a despiser of the gods at Lystra and he was stoned and imprisoned and persecuted wherever he went, and he bore the marks of the Lord Jesus upon his body even as he bore the marks of the Lord Jesus upon his life. He said, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed."⁶ And again he said, "I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake."⁷

Chrysostom was talking about Paul in prison at Rome, and he said: "Were any to offer me my choice, the whole heaven or that

⁶2 Cor. 4. 8, 9.

⁷2 Cor. 12. 10.

chain, I would prefer that chain. Were any to ask whether he should place me on high with the angels, or with Paul in his bonds, I would choose the prison. Were any about to change me into one of those powers that are in heaven, that are round about the throne, or into such a prisoner as this, I would choose to be such a prisoner. Nothing is then more noble than to suffer any evil for Christ's sake. I count not Paul so happy because he was caught up into Paradise, as because he was cast into the dungeon. I count him not so happy because he heard unspeakable words, as because he endured those bonds." They are brave words on the part of Chrysostom. They suggest the reality in the experience of Paul.

That experience has been repeated in many another brave disciple of Jesus. It was true in the beginning and it is still true that "all that will to live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."⁸ It is a strange fact that in the world thus far the perfect human character is persecuted. John Wesley suggested that such a character as is outlined in these beatitudes ought to be "the darling of mankind."⁹ but, on the contrary, it has been hated

⁸2 Tim. 3. 12.

⁹Wesley, *Works*, vol. 1, p. 204.

of all men. The mob always has cried: "Away with it! Crucify it!"

The world's darlings never have been the world's saints. In *Vanity Fair*, Faithful is put on trial before Mr. Justice Hate-Good, and the foreman of the jury is Mr. Blindman and the members of the jury are Mr. Hate-light and Mr. Live-loose and Mr. Malice and Mr. No-good. Mr. Blindman says, "I see clearly that the man is a heretic." Mr. Malice says, "I hate the very looks of him." Mr. No-good says, "Away with such a fellow from the earth." It is a matter of course that they should say such things. Faithful could not expect any other treatment at the hands of such jurymen.

Frederick William Robertson was a faithful preacher of the truth as he saw it, and he offended many church people by his unconvictionality and unorthodoxy. A lady once took him to task and threatened him with dire results for such preaching both in this world and the next. Robertson said, "I don't care." "Do you know what 'don't care' came to, sir?" she asked him. "Yes, madam," was the rather startling reply, "He was crucified on Calvary." Crucified to the world, as Jesus was, and as Paul was: that is the first necessity for faithful discipleship. Let no one begin the

Christian life who is not ready to take up the cross daily.

General Gordon wrote to his sister, "We are placed on earth in order to suffer like our Lord, not to enjoy life except in doing his will." It is as true to-day as it ever was that bad men hate good men. The Master was right when he said: "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. . . . If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you",¹⁰ but he had said to them there in the beginning of his ministry, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven." The prophets were both persecuted and blessed.

II. HOW BLESSED? It is possible for a man to have the world against him and still know himself for a happy man. As he goes on his lonely way One draws near and walks with him whose companionship is worth more than all the world beside. He is blessed beyond all other men in the presence and the protection of God and in the consciousness of God's abiding approval upon his life. He rejoices in the spotless character he is enabled to maintain and in whatever result of his labors he may

¹⁰John 15. 19, 20.

be given to see. He knows that the condemnation of the world rests upon him simply because of the good there is in him, and he rejoices and is exceeding glad that he is counted worthy to suffer reproach for the blessed Name. Like Moses, he esteems the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasure of the world's approbation.

He hungers and thirsts after righteousness even though he knows that when he gets it he will get persecution along with it. This last beatitude summarizes all the rest, and it summarizes in itself the whole picture of the Suffering Servant of Jehovah as described by Isaiah. He was despised and rejected of men, but he saw of the travail of his soul and was satisfied, for he had his portion and he had his spoil. He had unparalleled suffering with an unparalleled reward. So here those who are persecuted for Jesus' sake are blessed with a blank check drawn on the Bank of Heaven. All of its resources are at their demand. They may seem to be bankrupts as far as earthly goods are concerned, but they are inconceivably rich in their heavenly treasure. In the eyes of the world their lives may seem to be failures when they are spiritually victorious all the time. Jesus went to the cross, but he went there with a crown. He suffered and

entered into glory, but he had the glory of being God's Beloved all the time.

The promise attached to this last of the beatitudes is the promise attached to the first of them. The whole kingdom of heaven is given to those who are poor in spirit and those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. The last note in this octave of blessing echoes the first. The poor in spirit are imposed upon and persecuted. Their rights are trampled upon and they are treated as slaves and out-laws. It accords with the justice of heaven that at the very same time they are suffering these disabilities they are enjoying the peace and the power, the glory and the victory, the unlimited sovereignty and the inexhaustible wealth of the kingdom of heaven.

The time of their persecution may be either present or past, but the time of their reward is always present. This beatitude has to do with this life. There will be no persecution for righteousness' sake after this life is over. The blessedness promised here belongs to the present state of existence, where reviling and persecution and all manner of evil are prevalent. Persecution usually seems to contain all manner of evil within it. It has displayed a perfectly diabolical ingenuity in torture. It has been cunning and cruel, malicious and

treacherous. It has resorted to any and all weapons to accomplish its results. It has scrupled at nothing. It has given free play to the most hellish passions. Yet those who have suffered have persisted in declaring and believing that they were the most blessed of men, and in hoping and believing that their blessedness would be still greater when all their persecution was done.

Of course it is true that not everybody who is persecuted is blessed, but only those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. There are those who have a hard time of it simply because they are so consummately and continuously cantankerous. They delight in stirring up the animals. They never are happy except in opposition. They find their chief joy in contradiction. They are tactless meddlers in other men's matters. They are defiant in manner and bitter in spirit and unrestrained in their speech. They carry a chip on their shoulder and a sword in their mouth. They are usually overwrought and a little overzealous, and they never are happy until they have made everybody else uncomfortable. They emphasize their oddity and they exult in their independence on every suitable and unsuitable occasion. In season and out of season they work at the job of making them-

selves martyrs, rather than examples of the spirit of Christ.

Those who come into the experience of the blessedness here promised by Jesus are those who in all respects reproduce the experience and the character of Jesus. They have malice toward none and charity for all. They cherish no bitterness of spirit. They never aggravate anybody without cause. They aim always at winning rather than repelling. They seek not for any selfish advantage, but for the triumph of the right and the good. They are faithful champions of a cause. They suffer for the sake of the Name. They know that if they fail the cause will succeed. It will live on when they die.

They know that the martyrs are the most efficient apologists for the truth. They know that they will risk misunderstanding and misrepresentation; but they know that their motives are pure. They know that any interference with the profits of wrongdoing will raise a storm of protest and a mob of would-be murderers. When Paul's preaching began to interfere with the money-making of the image makers at Ephesus they began to threaten his life. When Paul cast the evil spirit out of the maid at Philippi, and her owners saw that their hope of gain had gone, they had Paul put

in prison at once. It always has been the fate of the reformer that he paid the price of slander and abuse and persecution before he could hope for success.

Wilberforce and his colleagues labored for years to bring about the abolition of the English slave trade and they at last succeeded in bringing about what the historian Lecky called "one of the three or four perfectly virtuous acts recorded in the history of nations." While the fight was on, Lord Nelson, the hero of Trafalgar, wrote, "I was bred in the good old school and taught to appreciate the value of our West Indian possession, and neither in the field nor in the Senate shall their just rights be infringed while I have an arm to fight in their defense or a tongue to launch my voice against the damnable doctrine of Wilberforce and his hypocritical allies."

The man who stands for righteousness will be cursed and called a hypocrite. If he persists in attacking entrenched evil in any form, he will be reviled and abused, and he may be crucified. It is not an altogether pleasant thing to attack intemperance or injustice of any kind. The assailant will be accused of interfering with individual liberties and hindering legitimate business. Yet it has to be done, let the consequence be what it may.

When war is hell and its methods are diabolical and its results are ruinous morally and economically, the lie must be given to those who proclaim it the school of virtue and the regenerator of the nation and the most potent force for civilization. He who says that in this day would seem to be either a conscious liar or a deluded fool and, though he may gain a reputation for virility and may bask in the sunshine of temporary popularity as other false prophets have done, it is the duty of the pacifist to denounce him and all his works as belonging to the devil and then to stand all the reviling and the persecution that may come his way, knowing that he will be blessed of God for his loyalty to the Prince of Peace even though he go with him to Calvary. His very persecution by the partisans of the wrong will be a proof to him that he is in the company of the Master and of the martyrs and of the true prophets of old. "Blessed are ye . . . Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you."

The seven beatitudes have to do with Christian character. The Christian character is blessed in itself; but it is sure to be persecuted in this world. So Jesus ends his list of beatitudes by saying that the persecution itself will

bring a blessing. All that the Christian has within him will make him blessed. All that comes to him from without will only increase his blessing. He will be blessed in his saintliness. He will be blessed in his suffering. He is blessed, and he looks forward to greater blessedness; he will be blessed all the time.

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CHAPTER XIV
THE CHALLENGE OF THE
BEATITUDES

1. *For This Life.* The heavenly Father would have his children to be blessed all the time. Jesus would have his disciples to be in full possession of these beatitudes as long as they live. To that end they must be of this character. It does not so much matter whether they be rich or poor, high or low, clever or not clever, pleasing to most or persecuted by all. It matters much as to whether they are peacemakers and poor in spirit and pure in heart. They will not be rewarded according to their natural endowments or their acquired rank in society. They will be rewarded if they are meek and mourning and merciful. The first thing Jesus makes clear is that his disciples are not to be judged or rewarded according to their wealth or their distinction or their achievements along mental or social lines, but only according to their character as measured by these beatitudes.

2. *For All.* It is possible for any man in any place and at any time to meet their re-

quirements. They are reasonable, and they are required of all. All these beatitudes can be had for the asking. They are not sold for any price. There is no entrance fee to the Kingdom. Money does not count, but character does. The only condition for the reception of these blessings is that of submission to the Kingdom's laws. A man cannot be partly poor in spirit and a little meek and occasionally merciful and know what these beatitudes mean. If unhesitatingly and whole-heartedly he hungers and thirsts after them, he can have the fullness of them.

There is one standard for all. The prince in the political world or in the financial world or in the intellectual world may be poor in spirit. A monarch may mourn and be meek. Anyone in any station of life may hunger and thirst after righteousness. The poorest of men may be peacemakers and pure in heart. All men may be merciful. We do not need to translate these beatitudes into terms of modern life. We need to translate modern life into the terms of these beatitudes. All society would be regenerated by them. The wounds of the nations would be healed by them. Any individual may have their blessings now. Jesus knew what the world needed for its salvation when he stood

there on the mountain summit on that spring day, and his words never have been antiquated. They are as true now as they ever were.

The only salvation for the world lies along this way. We cannot all be rich until we are all rich together. We cannot all be exalted in rank above our brethren, and that may suggest that we ought all to be content to be brethren together, serving according to our ability and receiving according to our need. We can all be blessed and that right away, without waiting for any social or religious revolution. The best way to bring about the desired social and religious change is for individuals to adopt and meet the standard of daily living set up in these beatitudes.

3. *Attainable.* As long as men continue to think that they are unattainable and the character they present is impossible in the present evil world the world will continue to be evil and consequently cursed. As long as men believe that these beatitudes are desirable but impracticable in the workaday world in which they do business they never will know the secret of true blessedness and the world never will be any better than it is now. The generation which repudiates the teaching of the beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount may

see a world war and the debacle which follows it. The generation which sees that these precepts contain the highest wisdom and the plainest common sense may see the ushering in of the kingdom of God upon earth.

4. *Not Interim Ethics.* There are those who say that all the teaching of Jesus was influenced by his eschatology. He believed that the world in which he lived would be soon coming to an end. It was scarcely worth while, therefore, to stand up for one's rights. The easy thing to do would be to let things take their course. What would be the use of having a row over situations which inevitably would soon cease? They tell us that the ethics of Jesus, therefore, are simply interim-ethics, stop-gap ethics, ethics for the time being alone. We know now that Jesus was mistaken in his eschatology, and we expect the present order of things to maintain itself through an indefinite future, and, therefore, we can see clearly that in the complications of modern society, the problems of modern industry, the issues of international relationships and all the intricacies of present-day civilization, much that Jesus approved and commanded is not practicable or possible.

Those theologians who see in Jesus only a deluded visionary whose eschatological errors

led him ethically astray never attempt to realize the blessedness here promised and in consequence they never come within sight of it. The simple saints who believe that Jesus was the supreme Master in spiritual insight and in the teaching of spiritual truth find in these beatitudes permanent ethical principles, as practical now as they ever will be or ever have been, and in the endeavor to realize them they personally experience a blessedness which has been hidden from the wise and the prudent; and it has been revealed to them that the only hope of the world's future lies in the universal realization of these ideals.

5. *Exemplified in the Life of Jesus.* Jesus exemplified them all and in due proportion. He did not cultivate any one of these virtues at the expense of the others. He developed them all in one symmetrical character. Even the sequence of them suggests the history of his life. He was born in poverty in Bethlehem, of poor but honest parentage. Then the voice of Rachel mourning for her children was heard in the Bethlehem homes, while the holy family went meekly away into Egypt to save the child's life. He grew up hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and that yearning finally drove him out into Messianic ministry.

His ministry was filled with miracles of mercy and love, and yet its greatest appeal always came from his perfect purity, his own spotless character. His work of peace and reconciliation found its consummation on the cross. The persecution which had followed him from the Jordan to the judgment hall climaxed in crucifixion. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and yet God anointed him with the oil of gladness above his fellows. He was the incarnation of blessedness because he was God's beloved Son. He had a comfort divine in the constant vision of the Father's face. The kingdom of heaven was with him wherever he went, and men saw in him and his life what the kingdom of heaven on earth might be.

At any one moment of his life he was the perfect example of the beatitudes he promised, for he always was the truly poor in spirit, the truly meek, the true mourner, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, busy in works of mercy, always pure, always a pacifist, always suffering for righteousness' sake and always through tribulation and persecution entering into his kingdom. Jesus not only spoke these beatitudes in the mountain sermon, he lived them day after day and year after year. He gathered up all these

elements of the perfect character into himself. He chose to be lowly and meek rather than pompous and proud. He preferred to be pure in heart rather than to purchase any measure of success by compromise. He had a passion for righteousness rather than for imperial purple or popular applause. He had a comfort and peace and blessedness which the world could not give and which the world could not take away.

6. *Exemplified in Love.*—Paul pictured the perfect character as perfect love, and some have wondered why Jesus did not say, “Blessed are all ye who are cherishing perfect charity for all your neighbors: for ye shall sit down at the Lord’s table and be satisfied with his bounty.” It is a rather striking fact that in these beatitudes Jesus makes no explicit mention of love, though he considered love to God and man the sum of all that was taught in the law and the prophets.¹ Farther on in the sermon,² Jesus gives explicit teaching concerning love, but he makes no direct reference to it here. Yet there is the same fundamental conception in the mind of Jesus and in the mind of Paul. Love underlies all these beatitudes, and it is the principle which runs

¹Matt. 22. 34-40.

²Matt. 5. 43-48.

through the whole sermon. Poverty of spirit is Love's humility, not vaunting itself and not puffed up. Mourning is Love's lament over those who would not be gathered into the safe shelter of the Kingdom. Meekness is Love's bearing in the face of injuries. Hungering and thirsting is Love's longing for the presence and the pleasuring of the Beloved. Mercy is Love busy with good works. Purity is Love's singleness of desire. Peacemaking is the continuous effort of Love to bring together the estranged and to make all hearts to be as one. Persecution is Love's reward in a wicked world. In the beatitudes we have a picture of Love and a portrait of Jesus, and Jesus asks that as he is so we may be in this world.

7. *A Supernatural Achievement.* Is it too much to ask of men like us? It is entirely too much. We never can attain to it by imitation or by our utmost unaided endeavor. It would take a miracle to make some men humble. It would take more than human power to make any human heart clean. The leopard could change his spots and the Ethiopian could change his skin more easily than any man could attain this ideal. It is not a natural product; it is a supernatural gift. It is a call to achieve the impossible.

It was a characteristic feature of the ministry of Jesus that he always was asking the weak and the infirm to do impossible things. He said to the man with the withered arm, "Stretch forth thy hand." He said to the palsied man, "Rise up, and walk." He said to the leper, "Go, show yourself to the priest as clean." It was impossible for any of these men to do these things; but at his command they did them! He gave the power with the command. That is our hope. All our sufficiency is in him, but he is more than sufficient for our need. The beatitudes call us to high adventure. They ask us to live dangerously and nobly and to put God to the test by our trust every day. He will meet the test if we have the compelling and triumphant faith of hero souls.

"So, duly, daily, needs provision be
 For keeping the soul's prowess possible,
 Building new barriers as the old decay,
 Saving us from evasion of life's proof,
 Putting the question ever, 'Does God love,
 And will he hold that truth against the world?'"³

There were members of that first Christian Church in Jerusalem who may have heard the Sermon on the Mount and who dared to put it into practice when they had all things in

³Browning, "A Death in the Desert."

common and were poor and merciful and peaceful together, breaking their bread from house to house and eating their food with gladness and singleness of heart. Peter and John put the beatitudes to the test when they were persecuted for righteousness' sake and having been scourged by the council they went forth in all meekness, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus. Paul proved the possibility of realizing heart purity in the midst of the abominations of the heathen cities and of rejoicing in constant victory in the midst of the persecutions of both Gentiles and Jews.

Jesus might have summed up all the beatitudes in one and said, "Blessed are those who follow me and live as I live," and there have been those in every age of church history who have risen to the challenge of that call and have followed Jesus in literal obedience to his commands and have lived a Christlike life in a ridiculing and persecuting world. They have been a remnant, a faithful few, and always an insignificant minority, but they have been the salt of the earth and the light of the world, and they have proved beyond all questioning that by God's grace the ideal of the beatitudes is a possible one and can be practiced even in the face of scoffing and un-

belief. They have had the world against them always. Only world-conquerors have been able to maintain themselves at this altitude. Only heroic spirits make the attempt. The skeptical do not think it worth while. The cowardly are afraid of the sacrifice and the effort demanded.

8. *Folly to the World.* The spirit of the beatitudes never has been dominant in the world as yet, and it looks as if it might be many centuries before we can expect them to be practiced by the majority. Those who follow Jesus now are a little flock and the wolves surrounding them consider them fools and legitimate prey. Suetonius referred to the sayings of Jesus as "the most contemptible rubbish," and most people both inside and outside the church treat them as if they were such still. Tertullian said that in his day Christians were considered as "utterly lacking in common sense," and to this day the beatitudes are regarded as beautiful but impracticable and most people think it would be utterly foolish to attempt to realize them in a world like this.

They say, "Life is a struggle and competition is keen and success must not be squeamish about its methods or its results upon other men. A man must be ambitious and aggres-

sive to get on in such a society as that in which we live. Have the meek and the gentle ever been known to get into the places of power in either the past or the present? Have not violence and bloodshed made the great empires and do they not maintain them today? Has not force always overpowered gentleness? The poor are not happy. The weak are imposed upon. The meek have no chance. In a world full of contest and rivalry the peacemakers are not wanted. Happy people are on the Boulevard or the Avenue. Blessed people are those who are blessed with this world's goods. Blessed is the man who always is sure of himself, filled with self-satisfaction, the man of tough body and iron will and no softness either of heart or head, the man who masters his millions of money and the millions of the mob, the popular idol, the plutocrat and autocrat."

Francis Bacon said: "The blessing of the Old Testament was prosperity, but the blessing of the New Testament is adversity," but they say, "Anybody can see that there is blessing in prosperity and everybody knows that there is no blessing in adversity. Give us men of action, fierce and implacable, armed to the teeth, and we can hope that they will get something for us; but the meek and the

merciful have nothing to expect but persecution and the worst of the bargain all round. You cannot get to the front in the crowd except by pushing your way with side and shoulders for all you are worth; and Jesus says, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit,' and that never will get you anywhere. You must smile if you expect the world to smile back at you; you must be cheerful if you would be liked; and Jesus says, 'Blessed are they that mourn,' and there is no sense in that. All the empire builders have been masterful men, and Jesus says, 'Blessed are the meek.'

'Force rules the world still,
Has ruled it, shall rule it.
Meekness is weakness,
Strength is triumphant.'

"If you want to find happy people you must look among the well-fed, but Jesus says, 'Blessed are the hungry and the thirsty.' You cannot stop to consider the other man's feelings when a big deal is on hand, and when a nation is concerned, you must not mind the masses who suffer in a campaign of conquest; but Jesus says, 'Blessed are the merciful.' You have to compromise most of the time, for a half loaf always is better than none, and no man can keep his hands clean in handling all the dirty work of the world, much less his motives

and his heart; but Jesus says, 'Blessed are the pure in heart.' The whole history of the world shows that all progress has come about by arraying class against class and party against party and nation against nation and race against race; and Theodore Roosevelt has told us that 'by war alone can we acquire those virile qualities necessary to win in the stern strife of actual life'; but Jesus says, 'Blessed are the pacifists.' "

It is all utter foolishness to the man of the world. Only a man who is crucified to the world can begin to understand it.

Jesus has another notion of blessedness. He says very quietly but with all firmness of settled conviction: "The blessed man is the man who does not think highly of himself, who is not pushing and domineering, but sympathetic and serving, whose heart is filled with tender compassion and a great longing for righteousness, who will give way and endure, and will be anxious only to maintain a clear conscience at all costs. The blessed people are the good people, the meek victims, the suffering saints, the humble and the down-trodden mystics who have a passion for purity and spiritual perfection and will risk all they have for that pearl of great price."

There is an absolute negation of the policy

of this world in the principles enunciated by Jesus. There is the challenge of the revolutionist in them. It will take courage to enlist under this banner. It is a choice spirit who faces the world with all firmness and says, with Jesus,

“It is accepted
 The angry defiance,
 The challenge of battle!
 It is accepted,
 But not with the weapons
 Of war that thou wieldest!

“Cross against corslet,
 Love against hatred,
 Peace-cry for war-cry!
 Patience is powerful;
 He that o’ercometh
 Hath power o’er the nations!

“Stronger than steel
 Is the sword of the Spirit;
 Swifter than arrows
 The light of the truth is,
 Greater than anger
 Is love, and subdueth!”

The fact of the case is that many of the disciples of Jesus have professed one creed and practiced another. That is just as true to-day as in any other period of church history.

9. *Folly to Many Modern Christians.* (1)

John Stuart Mill. In his treatise on "Liberty," John Stuart Mill said: "The maxims and precepts contained in the New Testament are considered sacred, and accepted as laws by all professing Christians. Yet it is scarcely too much to say that not one Christian in a thousand guides or tests his individual conduct with reference to these laws." He goes on to say that Christians believe in the standards of the New Testament "as people believe what they have always heard lauded and never discussed: but in the sense of that living belief which regulates conduct, they believe these doctrines just up to the point to which it is usual to act upon them."

(2) John Ruskin. As far as Great Britain was concerned, John Ruskin agreed with him. He said: "I know no previous instance in history of a nation's establishing a systematic disobedience to the first principles of its professed religion." It is just as true of us in America.

Many and possibly most of the church-members of to-day pray most earnestly to be delivered from these things which Jesus pronounces blessed. They have no desire to be poor in spirit or mourning or meek. They are not hungering and thirsting after heart purity. They would not be pacifists for any-

thing. They would avoid any action which would lead to persecution. They are not laboring for the advancement of the Kingdom above all other things. They profess to be followers of Jesus, but they never think of following his directions for a happy life.

(3) Pagan Criticism. This situation is perfectly apparent to the intelligent observer from any of the so-called pagan or heathen lands. One of them has said: "What bewilders the alien observer . . . is not the occasional aberrations of the Christian nations, but their habitual conduct and organization; not their failures, but their standards of success; not their omission to live up to right principles, but their insistence that wrong principles are right. Your religion is a noble if paradoxical creed, which affirms that all men are brothers, that humility and poverty are blessings, and riches a dangerous misfortune, that the way of service and self-sacrifice is the way of happiness. . . . What surprises me . . . is that you erect into a system the duty and happiness of practising precisely the opposite."

What did he mean by that? He meant that modern society and modern Christians worship Mammon rather than God, condone war and the capitalistic civilization which is the

prolific cause of war, and are the persistent and partisan supporters of a narrow nationalism which makes impossible the realization of any genuine brotherhood of men in the establishing of the kingdom of God.

(4) Tagore. It was Rabindranath Tagore who said: "The truth is that the spirit of conflict is at the origin and in the center of Western nationalism; its basis is not social co-operation. It has evolved a perfect organization of power, but not spiritual idealism. It is like a pack of predatory creatures that must have its victims." Then, with the voice of a prophet, he adds, "This bartering of your higher aspirations of life for profit and power has been your own free choice, and I leave you there, at the wreck of your own soul, contemplating your protuberant prosperity. But will you never be called to answer for organizing the instincts of self-aggrandizement of whole peoples into perfection, and calling it good?"

(5) Socialist. We profess to admire character and inherent worth more than the achievement of great wealth; but do we practice our creed? The modern Socialist says we do not.

"So long as modern business is conducted primarily for the individual business man's

profit; so long as the average individual business man gains the highest profit by exploiting his consumers, his workmen, his competitors, and the other businesses which serve his own; so long as he gains the least profit by being generous to the consumers, to his workmen, to his competitors, and to the other businesses which dovetail into his, so long is he under pressure which makes well-nigh impossible any great faithfulness to ideals of living by serving his fellow man, and which makes well-nigh inevitable his frank or concealed adherence to the principle of serving himself at the expense of others. By its very essence, capitalism denies the validity of the higher ideals to which the church, literature and certain racially preservative instincts call us for homage."

(6) *The Modern Pulpit.* A modern preacher, trying to deal honestly with his people, says to them in a sermon, "Here is the creed which some of us practice: I believe in the Dollar Almighty, Maker of nearly everything desirable on earth. I believe in seven per cent—and in as much more as I can safely get. I believe in Success—measured by Salary. I believe in getting ahead. If this means getting ahead of the other fellow—well, I am sorry for him, but it cannot be helped. I be-

lieve in religion, but not too much of it. I also believe that business is business.

“I believe in doing good in the world; but not to the extent of doing anything I really do not want to do, and not to the extent of giving until it hurts. I believe that my own sins, which are not many, ought to be forgiven by a just and merciful God; but if anybody sins against me, he had better look out! I believe in loving people who love me, and in being good to people who are good to me. I believe that most people are not worth considering, but that a few of them are unquestionably worth while. I, of course, am one of these few.

“I believe that all of this talk which we hear nowadays about a coming brotherhood of mankind is sheer nonsense. When you try to tell me that a Negro or a Jap or a Jew is my brother, you make me sick. I believe first, last, and always in having a good time. I sincerely hope that my good time will not rob anyone else of his good time; but if it does—well, once more, I am sorry, but it cannot be helped.

“Here is a part of the creed we profess. I believe in God . . . There is a moral order, which is the explanation of man’s highest thoughts and aspirations, and the source

of all that is greatest and best in human life. To live in harmony with this moral order is more important than to own a Rolls Royce. . . . Believing as I do that God is Father, it follows that I should recognize in every man I meet a son of God. It is easy to do this in the case of some great poet like Browning or Tennyson; or in the case of some great composer like Handel or Beethoven; or in the case of some great statesman like Gladstone or Lincoln. It is not perhaps so easy to do this in the case of some casual laborer with an unpronounceable foreign name who here in America knocks about from pillar to post in search of a job. But, . . . I cannot be at once a snob and a Christian. . . .

“Christianity refuses to place a missionary in one category and a manufacturer in another category, and to say of the missionary that he is here to serve and of the manufacturer that he is here to make money. No one is here to make money, and only incidentally, and only as it may suit his convenience, to render service. This is an incontestable part of the Christian creed. . . . As a Christian, I believe in love. I believe that love is more powerful than physical force. In the long run you can accomplish more by kindness than you can by blows. By blows you

merely break the heads of men and add to the world's doctor bill. By kindness you break the hearts of men and create in them new hearts and send them out as builders of a better world. If only we practiced the creed we profess!"⁴

The majority of Christians pay homage to the Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount as beautiful ideals, but they always have regarded them as impracticable in the present conditions. Sometime in the future, when the majority of the people have been converted and are good, it will be possible to practice these precepts, but in the present state of affairs it is better or at least more comfortable to live like the rest of the world. In that way the church has managed to keep on good terms with the world for the last sixteen centuries, and the world has dictated the policies of the church in large measure, and it is an open question whether the church has succeeded more largely in converting the world or the world has succeeded more largely in controlling the church.

The Great War showed the policies of the devil in the ascendancy in every land and the church the subservient tool of the state everywhere.

⁴Ernest Fremont Tittle.

In the height of that conflict, J. Patterson-Smyth said, "We are finding out that the world has been contenting itself with a thin veneer of Christianity, and that only a small minority anywhere are living deeply the Christian life." That will remain true until the church decides that Jesus is the teacher of the supreme wisdom and that his beatitudes hold the secret of the supreme happiness for the individual and the world.

CHAPTER XV

FIVE CONCLUDING NOTES

1. *Number and Groups.* How many beatitudes are there, and how are they to be divided? 1. Moberly thinks there are eight and he divides them two and two and two and one and one. "Two of them relate to virtues which are purely inward, which belong to a man in his own secret relation to God only, without any reference at all to other men—purity of heart, and hunger and thirst after righteousness. Two of them are inward virtues, having relation to our position among men—poverty of spirit and meekness. Two of them rather belong to the passive condition of human virtue, placed in the midst of a sad and unkind world—sorrow and persecution. One of the remainder, mercy, is the special virtue of the Christian in his active and outward dealings with other men. And in peacemaking, the last of the eight, he is regarded as going altogether out from himself, and entering into the transactions which arise between other people, and in which he himself has no share.

“Thus the Christian character, as drawn in the beatitudes, is that of the man who in his inner self maintains a heart perfectly pure, by God’s grace, from every defilement of the flesh and spirit, and longs for righteousness in Christ with a longing like that of him who hungers and thirsts after food and drink; who in his position in life and among men has a thorough—yet a strong, not feeble—meekness of mind and poverty of spirit; who accepts the condition of sorrow from God and persecution from men, if it should be the will of God that he be afflicted with them, in thankful submission, and with the single wish to find the blessing in them with which they are charged; who is characterized in the outer dealings wherein he is concerned with other men, by a prevailing and pervading mercy, and who, passing out of himself and entering into the concerns of other men, according to his position in life, is known as ever seeking peace, and ensuing it, putting men at one with God and with one another, so as to be in the very likeness, the very filial likeness, of God himself, by acting in so God-like a manner among men.”

One thing is at once apparent in this enumeration and that is that it does not follow the order of the beatitudes as Jesus gave them

and therefore it may be presumed that it does not represent the order of his thought. It may be very ingenious, but the ingenuity is not that of Jesus. It is too complicated to be correct.

2. Coleridge divides the eight beatitudes into three and two and one and two. He thinks that the first three beatitudes may be considered as in some sense disciplining the soul as regards itself, and the two which follow as perfecting our action toward our neighbor. "The interior man is first brought to perfection, and then we are taught how to exercise ourselves in virtuous actions, and especially in mercy. And, when this has been done, the soul is turned away from earthly things, and is taught, as far as possible, to purge itself from all dross and stain, that it may see God in the sixth beatitude, and after that, go on still further to work His own peculiar work of peace, and to suffer for it, in the seventh and the eighth."

The advantage of this outline is that it takes the beatitudes in their order; but it is difficult for us to see how the first three are to be distinguished from the next two as bringing the interior man to perfection or why the suffering of the eighth beatitude should be attached to the work of the seventh

any more than to the first or some of the rest. We hope for a clearer classification.

3. McAfee gives a more simple arrangement, and says that the eight beatitudes are divided into five and two and one: "Five of them refer to the inner condition—poor in spirit, meek, hunger and thirst after righteousness, the merciful, pure in heart. Two of them deal with experiences—mourning and persecution. One of them only has reference to activity, the peacemakers. That itself is suggestive. The principal element in membership in the kingdom of God on earth is not the work that a man does; it is the inner character of the man." Here again the order is tampered with, and we wonder how mercy can manifest itself in any other than an active way and why hungering and thirsting after righteousness should not be ranked as an experience as much as mourning and persecution.

4. Savage thinks that the eight beatitudes fall into two groups of four. "The first four beatitudes may be said to constitute the first table of the new law of religious life, for they deal with the attitude of men toward God. The remaining four similarly form the second table. They are concerned with the relations of men as members of human society." He

thinks, further, that each of these groups falls into two pairs; and in the first group "a passive virtue is placed first, and then with it is associated its correlative virtue of active expression." "The oppressed saints, who are unworldly in spirit, mourn over the evil plight of God's people; and meekness, or humility, marks an inward disposition, which manifests its devotion in an eager yearning for righteousness."

In the second group there are also two pairs, but for different reasons. "The fifth and sixth touch on the principles of two of the most prominent instances of man's duty to his neighbor; and peacemaking is closely allied with patient endurance of persecution." It would be pleasant to find the beatitudes falling into logical grouping like this, if we could be sure that it would be apparent to everybody as soon as it was stated. Evidently, these groupings would not occur to anyone without much reflection and even when stated so succinctly they are far from commending themselves at first sight. Why should poverty of spirit be considered more passive than mourning, and why should heart purity be defined as a man's duty to his neighbor?

5. Lees makes the same division into two

groups of four and he thinks that the first four present "the fourfold attitude which makes men look to God for spiritual income, for comfort, for promotion, and for satisfaction," and the second four deal with "four great relations between man and his fellows—strength with weakness at its mercy; purity in contact with defiling company; love which sees others at variance; rectitude suffering at the hands of tormentors." This is rather good, but there is no very apparent reason why the designation of the two groups might not have been exactly reversed.

Did not the Master say that the pure in heart would see God and that the peacemakers would be called the children of God? That might suggest that the group represented the fourfold attitude through which men obtained mercy from God and attained the sight of God and became the imitators and children of God and gained their sole blessedness in God. With that beginning we might go on to say that the first four represented four relations between man and his fellows, poverty of spirit over against prevalent arrogance, mourning over against prevalent indifference, meekness in contrast with self-assertion, and longing for righteousness in contrast with the feverish search for satisfaction

in other things. The ease with which this classification can be revised and reversed might be regarded as an indication of the fact that it is not of a very stable or assured character.

6. Bishop Gore divides the eight beatitudes into three and four and one. He begins with the thought of contrast which we have just suggested, and he says: "Our Lord describes the true blessedness, first of all negatively in the first three beatitudes by strong and marked contrasts to the character of the world: blessed are the poor, blessed are the meek, blessed are the mourners. Then he goes on to give its positive characteristics: its strong spiritual appetite for righteousness, its active and vigorous compassionateness, its single-mindedness or purity of heart, the deliberate aim it has to promote the kingdom of peace. Then, in the last beatitude, he answers the question how is such a character likely to find itself in such a world." This is as good as any of the others, and possibly no better than they.

7. In his imposing volume on the Great Sermon, Tait makes a still different division, three and one and three and one. He says, "The first three of the beatitudes are expressive of the sense of want—namely, poverty,

sorrow, humility; the fourth shows how this want is to be met by the perfect righteousness of Christ; the next three relate to possession—pity, purity, and peace; while the remaining one speaks of the world's hostility to the heirs of Christ's kingdom." This is ingenious and attractive, and if there were not so many other rival suggestions, we might be ready to adopt it as satisfactory and conclusive; but the very multitude of classifications makes it clear that no single classification is likely to be satisfactory to all.

We have noted divisions into five and two and one, into four and four, into three and four and one, into three and one and three and one, and into two and two and two and one and one. All of these agree in counting the beatitudes as eight in number. We would prefer to call them seven, the perfect number, and then say that an eighth beatitude has been added to this perfect list. The word "Blessed" is repeated nine times here, and some have thought that there were nine beatitudes; but almost all of the commentators agree that the last "Blessed" simply repeats the one before it and the two constitute the eighth beatitude.

8. The number seven occurs so many times in the Gospel according to Matthew and in

all the Gospels that it is but natural to look for it here; and it is at once apparent that the seven beatitudes in order represent the various elements entering into the perfect Christian character as exemplified in Jesus, and then this eighth beatitude is pronounced not upon any added element of character, but upon those who with the perfect character and because of it have had to suffer persecution. The seven beatitudes are pronounced upon men for what they are, and then an eighth is added for what may happen to them. This distinction between inward characteristics and outward circumstances, between character and consequences would seem to be a perfectly obvious and legitimate one. It is not apparent that any other division need be made.

We know that the perfect number seven frequently falls into a division of four and three, looking toward the human and the divine aspects of the whole. With that fact in mind, and remembering how often in the Scriptures this division occurs, we might say that the first four beatitudes set forth the perfect character in its human disability and need, poor, mourning, meek, hungering and thirsting; and then when the blessedness of the Kingdom and the comfort and the inheritance and the filling with righteousness have

been attained the perfected character enters upon the exercise of the attributes belonging to God himself. He is merciful, even as the heavenly Father is merciful; he purifieth himself even as he is pure; he becomes a peacemaker and thus a child of the God of Peace. The division then would be four and three, making up the perfect number seven and setting forth the blessedness of the perfect character.

Having completed that perfect number and having pictured that perfect character, Jesus added in the eighth beatitude, "All those who live this life will suffer persecution; but they will be blessed nevertheless. They will be blessed in themselves and everything that happens to them will be to their blessing. They will have reviling, but they will have reward. They will have persecution, but they will have peace of mind and purity of heart. They will have slander, but they will be saints. They will have tribulation, but they will have consolation here and coronation hereafter. Let them rejoice and be exceeding glad, for this is the blessed life, even though it does have its trials." Seven beatitudes for men because of what they are and then the assurance added that their blessedness will not be precluded by what men may do to them. Their

blessedness will be enthroned securely within themselves and any attack from without will only increase their consciousness of it and their enjoyment in it.

They will be blessed when not persecuted because the kingdom of heaven is within them. They will be blessed when persecuted because the kingdom of heaven will still be within them, and no man can rob them of that treasure. They can be superior to circumstances. Their beatitude can be perfect in persecution and pain. Martyrs have rejoiced in it at the stake and on the cross and in the arena. They have suffered tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and sword. They have been accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Yet in all these things they have been more than conquerors through Him who loved them and gave them his gracious blessing and aid. If happiness comes from that which happens to a man, blessedness comes from that which abides within the man in all experiences and through all circumstances favorable or untoward.

The beatitudes are considered seven in number by Ewald, Hilgenfeld, Lange, Meyer, and Bernhard Weiss. They are counted as eight by Bleck, Heinrici, Keil, Keim, Kübel, Tholuck. Votaw, Weizsäcker, and others, besides

those mentioned in our discussion. We call the list eight, seven of which set forth the perfect character and the last of which pronounces the possibility of its blessedness in any conditions and anywhere both here and hereafter.

2. *Source.* Where did Jesus get his beatitudes? Largely out of the Old Testament. It is as Tholuck said, "There can be no doubt that all the ideas which meet us here, those of the Kingdom of God, the righteousness of that kingdom, the poor in spirit, the pure in heart, seeing God, etc., were no new ideas, but well-known ones, of which Christ only revealed the deepest meaning." The Book of Psalms began with a beatitude and there are many beatitudes scattered through the whole volume of the sacred writings. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly."¹ "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity."² "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven and whose sin is covered."³ "Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord."⁴ "Blessed is he who considereth the poor."⁵ "Blessed are the undefiled in the way."⁶ "Blessed are they that

¹Psa. 1. 1.

²Psa. 32. 2.

³Psa. 32. 1.

⁴Psa. 112. 1.

⁵Psa. 41. 1.

⁶Psa. 119. 1.

dwell in thy house.”⁷ “Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee.”⁸ In some of these beatitudes Jesus may have found the inspiration of his own.

Did he say, “Blessed are the poor in spirit”? The Psalmist had said, “The Lord . . . saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.”⁹ And again, “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise,”¹⁰ and in the book of Isaiah we read, “To this man will I look, saith the Lord, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.”¹¹

Did Jesus say, “Blessed are they that mourn”? In the book of Isaiah he had read, “He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, . . . to comfort all that mourn,”¹² and in the Psalms he had found the words, “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy,”¹³ and that other beatitude, “Blessed is the man whom thou chasteneth, O Lord, . . . that thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity.”¹⁴

⁷Psa. 84. 4.

⁸Psa. 84. 5.

⁹Psa. 34. 18.

¹⁰Psa. 51. 17.

¹¹Isa. 66. 2.

¹²Isa. 61. 1, 2.

¹³Psa. 126. 5.

¹⁴Psa. 94. 12, 13.

Did Jesus say, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth"? It was almost a direct quotation from the psalmist who said, "The meek shall inherit the earth."¹⁵ Did Jesus say, "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled"? That beatitude may have been suggested by another passage in the Psalms concerning the meek, "The meek shall eat and be satisfied, they shall praise the Lord that seek after him,"¹⁶ or that passage concerning the psalmist's thirst after God, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God."¹⁷ In the law was the command, "Thou shalt follow after that which is altogether righteous, that thou mayest live and inherit the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee,"¹⁸ and in the prophets was the promise, "The effect of righteousness is quietness and confidence forever."¹⁹

Did Jesus say, "Blessed are the merciful"? In the Old Testament he could have found the proverb, "He that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he,"²⁰ and in the Psalms that other beatitude, "Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of

¹⁵Psa. 37. 11.

¹⁶Psa. 22. 26.

¹⁷Psa. 42. 2.

¹⁸Deut. 16. 20.

¹⁹Isa. 32. 17.

²⁰Prov. 14. 21.

trouble.”²¹ Did Jesus say, “Blessed are the pure in heart”? The psalmist had said, “Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart,”²² and again, “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart.”²³ Did Jesus say, “Blessed are the peacemakers”? Isaiah had said, “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace.”²⁴

The spirit of the beatitudes is the spirit of the Old Testament. Their phraseology is almost wholly drawn from this source. There is no originality in them except that of their compilation and their grouping. Together they make a complete picture of the ideal character, and whatever of material ambitions may have been associated with some of these statements in the Old Testament has here been transformed into spiritual aspiration until we have the perfect pattern shown to us upon the mount.

3. *Preface.* Jesus made the beatitudes the preface to the great sermon. They represent the fundamental laws of his gospel. The whole gospel is a gospel of blessed-

²¹Psa. 41. 1.

²³Psa. 24. 3.

²²Psa. 73. 1.

²⁴Isa. 52. 7.

ness, of good tidings of beatitude to the race. Here is the whole gospel annunciated in the beginning. Harnack says, "Should we be threatened with doubts as to what Jesus meant, we must steep ourselves again and again in the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount. They contain his ethics and his religion, united at the root, and freed from all external and particularistic elements."

4. *Synopsis.* The rest of the sermon is in large measure a commentary upon them, so that if we were in doubt as to what any of them meant, the sermon ought to make it clear to us. It is an exposition of the principles they have laid down. Do they speak of the poor and the satisfying of the hungry and the thirsty? The sermon says that the Father knows all our need, and if we ask he will give unto us; and it sets forth the abundance of his provision for the birds and the flowers and all the children of his love. Do they mention genuine mourning and meekness? The sermon inveighs against hypocritical gloom and any pretense of sadness and gives a whole section to the discussion of meekness in practical operation.

The beatitudes speak about righteousness, and another whole section of the sermon is given to a description of real righteousness,

not practiced for the applause of men, but for the approval of God, who sees and judges the inward motive as well as the outward life. The sermon emphasizes the necessity of heart purity which will preclude the possibility of even a lustful look, and it dwells upon the duty of forgiveness and reconciliation with one's brother, and it sets forth the difficulties to be met and the persecution to be expected by the peacemaker, and it extols the exercise of mercy and gentleness and considerateness. The beatitudes give us a synopsis of the whole sermon. The sermon gives us the practical working of the beatitudes in daily life, as we hope to show in another volume.

5. *Summary.* Jesus has drawn the picture of the ideal character. It is dependent upon God and detached from worldly and selfish standards of life. It is humble in bearing and meek in spirit. It mourns over any personal or community delinquency and it hungers and thirsts after personal and community righteousness. It is merciful in punishment and in judgment. It is charitable in deed and in word. It is pure in heart and with the motives and methods of purity it sets about the task of making peace in the world.

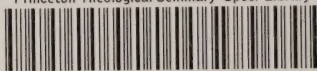
It is blessed beyond all comparison because its possessor is a child of God and a present

heir to all the resources of the Kingdom of God. He enjoys the mercy of God and the comfort of God. He is filled with the righteousness of God and he has the beatific vision of God. At present he will suffer persecution, but great will be his reward in heaven and incalculably great is his reward in his present experience. He lives in the sure hope that he will inherit the earth. He rejoices and is exceeding glad. He is a walking beatitude.

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